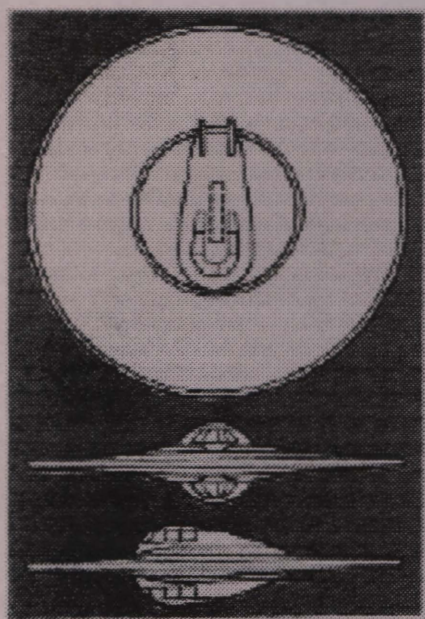


MAGONIA⁶³



INTERPRETING CONTEMPORARY VISION AND BELIEF • 1968 - 1998

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FASCISTS, FUTURISTS AND FLYING SAUCERS

David Sivier discovers the
historical links

COMMUNION CUPS AND CRASHED SAUCERS

Peter Brookesmith follows the
ufologists on their sacred quest



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PETER ROGERSON'S NORTHERN ECHOES

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Last January, I made one of my occa-
sional sorties out of my not so easy
chair and ventured into the Abduction
Conference at Southport. An amusing
time was had by all, and as this has
been covered in Andy Roberts's and
The Hierophant's columns in the April
issue of *Fortean Times*, and com-
mented on by Jenny Randles in
NUFON News 178 there is not much
more to add. However the question is
raised, as to whether the background of
ufologists and their past lives should be
a matter of public discussion. Though
there seems to be the feeling that it should
not, I can't help feeling that if ufologists
want the privilege of going into people's
homes and interrogating them, the pub-
lic have a right to know just who they
are inviting into their house, and to
know about anything in their back-
ground which would allow them to
make an informed choice. After all
ufologists and other paranormal inves-
tigators do deal at times with fairly vul-
nerable people. and the whole of this
area has an appeal for often naive and
impressionable young people, so we
should perhaps err on the side of cau-
tion.

One of the highlights of the meet-
ing was Jenny Randles' revelations of
further developments in the
Rendlesham affair. Though Jenny did
say what these were at the meeting, I
gather she wants more reticence in
print. Enough to say they accord with
the suspicions that we have had for
some time. *Magonia* understands Jen-
ny's point about privileged information,
as we have twice been given off-the-
record information on this case from
sources no longer active in British
ufology, who don't want a public slang-
ing match (and which in part cannot be
revealed because of the British libel
laws)

What Jenny's new evidence adds
weight to the possibility that the stories
were fleshed out and shored up in 1983
on orders from the authorities, perhaps
because of Jenny's own speculations
about a possible nuclear accident, or
perhaps because (and I suspect this is
just as likely) of Vince Thirkettle's
claims about the lighthouse. This was

an allegation (whether true or not
doesn't matter) which could have had a
very unfortunate (from the Reagan/
Thatcher perspective) gloss put on it,
particularly when mixed with some of
the other rumours and allegations float-
ing round at the time, involving drinks,
drugs and the firing of live ammunition.
The possibility that a lighthouse beam
made the US personnel who would be
soon (and perhaps already were)
guarding nuclear missiles practically
wet themselves in terror was not one
which the governments on either side
of the Atlantic would have liked bandied
about. Step in nice Mr Murdoch and the
so-convenient Halt memorandum, and
in the resulting fuss the potentially ex-
plosive lighthouse story becomes a nice
safe story of spoilsport sceptics getting
up the noses of UFO hunters, guaran-
teeing that no serious investigative
journalist will touch it with a barge pole.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The well known British soap opera
Coronation Street seems occasionally
to come up with story lines which high-
light some of the obscurer psychologi-
cal conditions. A few years ago it was
Carmel the erotomaniac nurse; now it is
Jon Lindsay and the further shores of
fantasy proneness. In fact what Lindsay
and his victims suffer from doesn't
seem to have a common name, so I
propose to give it one: Caraboo Syn-
drome, after the early nineteenth cen-
tury girl who claimed to be Princess
Caraboo of Javas. Caraboo syndrome
appears to be a component of some
cases of what are called fantasy prone
personalities, and seems to involve to
total immersion in the world of the
imagination. The fictional characters of
Walter Mitty and Billy Liar are perhaps
typical examples, but in real life it is of-
ten much less amusing. The Caraboo
personality retreats from the dull real
world, into an exotic one of his or her
own creation, in some cases this may
be little more than a private game, but
in others the fantasy world takes over,
and literally all the world becomes a
stage, and life a play in which the
Caraboo syndrome personality is the
hero or heroine. There is a kind of pa-
thology of narration, the person cannot

stop telling stories.

Caraboo syndrome personalities
can be extraordinarily persuasive, per-
haps because while they are telling the
stories they actually believe them, and
don't give off the kind of subtle clues
that most people do when they are ly-
ing. They *actually believe* their grandio-
se identities and plans.

In our field there are some obvi-
ous examples, Cyril Hoskins, who be-
came Lopsang Rampa, or George Hunt
Williamson, who, after dropping out of
college awarded himself a PhD. Even-
tually this did not satisfy and he be-
came Brother Philip, of the Monastery
of the Seven Rays in the Andes, then
Dr and eventually Prince Michel
D'Obrenovic-Obilic van Lazar, Duke of
Sumadija. Not all are as grandiose as
this: a series of good war stories, or the
a career on a secret project like Bob
Lazar will do. Others will drift into the
heights of religious grandiosity. Usually
not far along that road all memory of
reality goes. This is true pathology,
perhaps best described as schizo-
affective paranoia. If one wanted a less
formidably medical name then Sebbat-
tai Syndrome after the seventeenth
century would-be Messiah Sebbattai
Sevi would do. This is the territory of L
Ron Hubbard, David Koresh and one
imagines, Billy Meir.

In Caraboo Syndrome one can
also, I suspect, include those people
who affect to believe they are aliens,
many of the producers of rich and de-
tailed paranormal narratives, and many
of the characters who feature on media
exposés. We can also see that
Caraboo Syndrome has connections
into Munchhausen's Syndrome and Mul-
tiple Personality Disorders. The
Carabooer may equally presented nar-
ratives of persecution and victimisation
(Jon accuses both his wife and Deirdre,
his mistress, of persecuting the other),
gaining much sympathy in the process.
There may be a single reasonably co-
herent character and narrative; the guy
who everyone said was the best
lawyer/doctor/priest (the usual trio) in
town until it was found he wasn't, or
there may be a sort of narrational diar-
rhoea as one tale follows another.

COMMUNION CUPS AND CRASHED SAUCERS

PART THREE

Meanwhile, back at the ranch

If, so far, the profile I have offered of the hidden aspects of the Semitic religions and of ufological belief is accurate, then the mythic imagery and mode of belief of ufology, and particularly of the abduction scenario, should belong to a particular religious type: I am suggesting that the American Religion, as defined by Prof. Harold Bloom,^[1] has formed the template of ufology-as-religion. But plainly ufology thrives in a wider context than religious, or theological, thought and feeling. The successful export from the USA of a Ufological Religion may, for instance, be a symptom and a sign that a deracinated and relativistic Western culture has had to generate a new religious perspective to accommodate and resolve its own disturbing and destructive characteristics and their consequences. Among which are a paradoxical view of science, and a blankness and dumbness in the face of numinous experience.

Before touching on those issues it may be helpful to recapitulate:

UFOs, and in particular their folkloric offspring the crashed flying saucer and Grey alien abductors, were spawned in the USA. Therefore any theological dimensions of the UFO phenomenon ask to be measured initially by the yardstick of American religious constructs. The available statistics demonstrate that, overwhelmingly, the USA regards itself as a Christian country. If the analysis of Harold Bloom is admitted, it is clear that indigenous American Christian orthodoxies share a deep structure of belief and outlook even when they appear to be incompatible in matters of ritual and doctrine, and when politically they may be mutually hostile. Bloom captioned this deep structure the 'American Religion' exactly because it informs denominations and

Grey aliens move in mysterious ways.

The argument in this series has been that they bear more than a coincidental resemblance to certain rarely advertised aspects of the Semitic God.

In the final part of his diagnosis,

PETER BROOKESMITH

further explores how this is so, and discovers some startling parallels between the legends of crashed UFOs and the imagery of a powerful Christian myth.

sects as diverse as Mormonism, Christian Science and the Black Baptist churches, and even, he argues, Black Islam.

The American Religion, Bloom says, is a 'severely internalized Quest romance', whose goal is immortality. Experience of that immortality is gained shamanistically - through direct revelation, without mediation, and in solitude. Immortality is already presumed or predicated in an underlying dualistic (Gnostic) belief that the individual harbours a remnant of divinity - the 'divine spark' within himself, which is older than creation; it is symbolized by the empty, post-Resurrection cross of American churches. Lying beyond this and informing it, I would add, is the motif of America as Eden, which vastly predates the birth of the American Religion in the Great Disappointment of 1844, when (the deadline having already been put back from 1843) the world did not end as predicted by William Miller.

This fixation on immortality in an Edenic context leads one to the rather startling thought that part of the American psyche simply does not accept death.^[2] The emphasis on resurrection, and particularly the corpse-free cross, suggests that such stubborn recusancy toward mortality is connected to a discomfort with the physical body.^[3] This unease may have its immediate roots in English Puritanism; it is central to much of Gnosticism, and it has extraordinary manifestation in such American cults as Christian Science and Pentecostalism and the pre-Disappointment celibate Shakers, whose founding members were American by necessity rather than choice or destiny. Resurrection and rebirth - whether on Judgement Day, or as born-again Christian, or in the ecstasy of ritual worship - are *out of and away* from the human body, its cravings, agonies and ambiguous effluvia. While the American Religion is strikingly optimistic over spiritual ques-

tions, it exhibits classic Christian tendencies in recoiling from the flesh and in its fixations upon carnal sin and consequent (even arbitrary) hell fire. In this latter aspect, its self-contradictions are at least consistent with the traditions of its parentage in Christianity, whether Protestant or Catholic.

CELESTIAL MECHANICS

These core notions are recast in ufological experience and discourse, and, although the emphases on the elements differ, they do so no more than their different proportions in (say) Mormonism, Seventh-Day Adventism and the Watchtower Society.

The ufological expression and manifestation of the American Religion predictably follows its ancestral, 'orthodox' pattern. At its most sumptuous, in the abduction syndrome, it too reveals itself as dualistic, masochistic, deeply uncomfortable with the human body, and much obsessed with sex, personal rebirth and resurrection. The last has strong millennial and apocalyptic concatenations on a social level. It seems likely that ufological religiosity appeals to people already steeped in such an outlook, and to that extent it should be easily exportable to cultures penetrated by similar forms of salvationism. But, if this is so, one can scarcely avoid noticing that the overt symbolic forms of the Ufological Religion are very different from those of its progenitors; and this allows one the choice of regarding it as a kind of sport from the ecclesiastic tradition.

More revealing, however (more fruitful to me, at any rate), has been to enquire what psychological and emotional niche is filled by the Ufological Religion, and why that niche is inaccessible.

1 Harold Bloom, *The American Religion*, Simon & Schuster 1992.

2 Not entirely facetiously, I wonder if Hollywood does not encourage the notion, albeit in the context of secular violence (the conceptual traffic, however, probably runs both ways, between religious and secular cultures). Randolph Scott, Christopher Walken or John Travolta may die in a spray of Kensington gore in one movie but we know they'll be back in another before long. Even believe-it-or-don't Ripley, a.k.a. the knee-melting Sigourney Weaver, has been reborn (by cloning) from grim death in *Aliens III* to continue the series this winter in *Alien Resurrection*.

3 Racquel Welch's famous and oft-repeated plaint that she has felt 'trapped' inside her beautiful body is an extreme example of this affliction, and not a bad one of an incapacity for irony. To say nothing of ingratitude.

4 Mary Baker Eddy (whose ideas I had hoped to examine at greater length) comes to mind here: according to her, by abandoning the body, especially the mucky complications of sex, one overcomes the idea of death, and is resurrected.

5 I have borrowed this example from Kevin Randle.

6 Cf. 'It is clear from all the descriptions of alien activities that they need our participation. ... it is all in the abduction literature, and outlines a scenario in which the aliens cultivate relationships with us. They may also be using all the advanced technology you decide they ought to have - while reverting to elementary procedures to make sure we know what's going on.' - Greg Sandow, post to the e-mail list UFO UpDates, 10 October 1997, archived on the Web and accessible from the URL: <http://www.ufomind.com/ufo/updates>. In other words, Sandow ascribes the primitive appearance of alien medical technology to an alien motive, the desire to communicate unambiguously what they are up to; although he offers no reason why they should wish to tell us this, in particular, so plainly, or why he believes it possible to read the alien mind. His perceptive point that (ostensible) aliens appear to 'need our participation' and 'cultivate relationships' with humans can be better understood when illuminated by the felt inadequacy of orthodox religion (not even to go so far as citing the 'death' of God treated by Nietzsche) in the face of the history of the 20th century; see below.

7 See Karen Armstrong, *A History of God*, Ballantine 1994, pages 64-71. Luria seems to have arrived at his 'Gnosticism' independently, without knowledge of the earlier, Christian texts.

8 At the same time, one recalls that the Mormon God is a material person, who created the Universe out of pre-existing matter.

9 Quintus Tertullian (160-c.225 CE), one of the most influential theologians of the Latin Church, who was able to look upon the savage God of the Hebrews without flinching (see his *Adversus Marcionem*) famously said of his Christianity *Credo quia inepitum* 'I believe because of its absurdity' - and remarked of the resurrection of the Nazarene, *Certum est quia impossibile est* - 'The fact is certain, because it is impossible.'

10 For wide-ranging discussions of these and related matters, see Geoffrey Cannon, *Superbug: Nature's Revenge?*, Virgin 1995; Theo Colborn, J.P. Myers & D. Dumanoski, *Our Stolen Future*, Little, Brown 1996; and Laurie Garrett, *The Coming Plague*, Farrar, Strauss & Giroux 1994.

11 Phillip Lloyd-Lewis, letter, 'OnLine' section of the *Guardian*, 30 March 1995.

sible to its (relatively) orthodox forebears, the sects of the original American Religion. Certainly the Ufological Religion has not displaced its precursors; indeed it may only be shadowing other forms of religious expression. Both forms of faith may, after all, co-exist in the same person.

In the Ufological Religion, revelation and the shamanic journey (itself a rite of psychic rebirth) are translated into the abduction scenario; resurrection is enacted in the 'life-changing' effects reported by participants in close encounters; immortality and the divine spark are confirmed in the human genetic contribution to the godling's evolution or survival. The aliens' fascination with all things sexual, their somewhat uncaptivating bedside manner and painful manipulations and exploitation of their captives' bodies are consistent with - and may well symbolize - torment arising from the limitations, unruliness and even sheer messiness of human biology, impediments that the aliens so noticeably lack.^[4]

The mystifyingly primitive state (by current terrestrial standards) of alien medical science is more parsimoniously explained in this frame of reference, by looking at it as a symbolic and psychological mechanism, than by retreating into notions of alien disinformation or deviousness. The aliens' crude 'genetic' procedures (which a competent human DNA engineer could conduct more efficiently by sampling hairdresser's sweepings^[5] or the detritus of any tourist beach in summer) also make rudely plain the symbolic propinquity and interdependence of human and alien.^[6] Fairies - another race of diminished and dying gods - too needed human bloodlines to preserve themselves, we are unavoidably reminded. Less familiar in a godforsaken age is the Jewish tradition of the dependence of God on mankind, a notion radically refreshed in the Safed Kabbalism of Isaac Luria (1534-72), which can fairly be described as Gnosticism without Christ.^[7]

As previously noted, the magic technology of the aliens gives them and their craft what terrestrial science would regard as miraculous powers: even their divine capacity to read minds may be technological rather than inborn. The UFO myth is vague on this point. But this techno-scientific aspect of the aliens, along with their visible, material, and unavoidably biological nature, sets them most distinctly apart from the God of the Semitic traditions, and makes the aliens godlings.

Even so, aliens do have many attributes of full-blown gods: solid four-dimensional nature, of the kind Dr Johnson appealed to when he kicked a stone to refute the phenomenalism (*esse est percipi*) of Bishop Berkeley, does not constrain them. Despite their own material incarnation, aliens are reputedly capable of shape-shifting, and deliberate and even selective invisibility, for example, besides their notorious ability to float themselves -

and us - through walls and windows. Some of the paratheologians of ufology propose that the aliens are not (or not exclusively) extra-terrestrial, but partake of 'other dimensions', from which they manifest in our spacetime. Even superstring theory cannot accommodate this notion within physics, so the 'dimensions' inhabited by aliens take on a religious or even occult cast. According to believers, most gods, including the Semitic God and the Hindu pantheon (and the souls of the dead, whether in Heaven or Summerland) also exist on transcendental 'other' or 'higher' dimensions of being, which are inaccessible to both scientific instruments and flesh and bone.^[8]

According to some not-very-much-wilder flights of UFO mythology, it was aliens who created humanity, and human religions - but not, apparently, the Cosmos. So like the Gnostic Demiurge they are ringmasters of the human circus, dancing between the Creator and ourselves. Nonetheless, the aliens' manipulations of time and matter and their capacity to circumvent natural laws, while divine in nature, are based (it is said) in superior science and technology. Something is going on here.

What can it be?

IS SCIENCE IDOLATRY?

Erich von Daniken deserves some credit at this point. He may have stolen others' ideas, but his books' extraordinary commercial success is testimony to the appeal of his implicit and very probably unconscious endeavor: to reconcile religion and science. The first is irrational,^[9] but apparently necessary in some form to a sense of human wholeness and responsibility; the second is wholly rational, ostentatiously reductive, responsible only to itself, and perceived as an horned adversary of religion, especially when a touchy subject like evolution raises its ugly head.

Scientists are often called priests of a modern religion, but they seem on reflection to be more like kings and princes - of an empire of savage materialism. We enjoy the fruits of their rule but do not entirely trust them. Their powers have a Faustian reek and their inclinations are worse than pagan. Scientists seem to combine amoral curiosity and hubris in equal measure. Nowhere do these qualities seem more obvious, and unnerve people more, than when they meet in genetic research.

Matters such as cloning - science fiction coming true - and the use of aborted fetuses as laboratory material produce reflexive moral reactions, behind which lie real ethical issues that scientists seem not to have considered before setting-to with their experiments. Even genetically manipulated crop plants, created for the best of motives, may have unforeseen ecological effects; as may the over-liberal employment of hormones in industrialized animal husbandry - effects that may already have come to roost in

the human reproductive capacity.^[10] The dehumanizing effects of technologically-scientific materialism have been debated by cultural critics since the 18th century: but the issues have never been so easily grasped as in the products of modern genetic research. These strike immediately at our senses of personal and cultural identity.

Individual scientists are not inhuman, and science and its technological progeny are not all wicked: but the scientific method as one of the intellectual glories of our age, or the endless personal, domestic and social benefits that science has brought to all manner of people are not really the issue at this point. For here I am speaking of the caricature of science that people apprehend at the visceral level, and that is more accurately called Scientism. But on the Clapham omnibus this is what is called Science, a capitalized entity often treated as if it were a sentient life form. Scientists are subsumed into the shadowy organism referred to as 'They'.

The popular conceit of Science working with incorrigible, feckless and reckless amorality is shown well enough in this collation of paranoia and false oppositions:

"Electrons give us electronic equipment, yes, but neutrons give us nuclear weapons. Chemistry creates plastics and drugs and thereby creates world-wide pollution and drug abuse. Where does the balance lie? Science cannot just take credit for the good things and deny responsibility for the bad things.

"Bright scientific minds, given free rein and unencumbered by ethical doubts, have ushered in a nightmare world of growing wealth, growing knowledge and growing destruction. Is unbridled curiosity so desirable?

"...Which is worse, a tomorrow with no science for children to be interested in or a tomorrow with no children to take an interest in science?"^[11]

This is surely beyond parody; but there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the sentiment.

One of Science's most salient by-products has been the gradual erosion of the credibility of religion in the West. The rot may have set in with Galileo, but the late 19th and early 20th centuries saw it gallop. Against a deracinating background of intense industrialization and urban growth came the findings of Lyell and Darwin, followed apace by Pasteur, Koch, Einstein, and Heisenberg: Scientists were not entirely to blame for undermining a religious outlook, although they provided a canting vocabulary for others who continued the work. Its drift may be indicated by F.R. Leavis's formulation: 'Though we have to recognize that Darwin's life testifies to the existence of intelligence and purpose, his theory of evolution offered to dispense with the need for those words.'^[12]

Claiming to be scientists but

in reality cultists were Marx, Freud and Jung (who on breaking with Freud wanted to found his own religion), each in his way gnawing at the roots of faith and familiar concepts of human dignity, aspiration and meaning. Einstein's concept of relativity trickled out of physics into the wider culture, where it mutated into a notion of moral relativism - the seductive proposition that there are no moral absolutes. Wattered by Freud's crocodile tears (*his* essential pessimism about human nature being essentially self-indulgent), this self-serving principle was destined to flourish in the social fragmentation following urbanization, and most especially in the stupefaction of the European intelligentsia following the First World War.

THE ABYSS STARES BACK

No one, I trust, would take what I have written in this series as an advertisement for institutional Western religion. But it seems to me that the slow retreat of God from the West since the 1860s is intimately linked to inferences drawn from science and to pseudo-scientific assertions that no ultimate purpose beyond the mechanical or the self-serving informs existence; and the result has been the creation of an existential void so profound that it is scarcely recognizable to those engulfed by it.

A consequence of the atmospheric ubiquity of this emptiness at the heart of our civilization is the difficulty of demonstrating its existence: it is, to borrow a phrase from Paul Devereux, a 'cultural bubble', and accordingly nearly invisible to its inmates. But one can point to symptoms of its existence, in the hope that what is being indicated can still be sensed. One has to trust that words have not entirely lost their meanings in English. The symptoms of this collapse of a sense of meaning are many, but I will concentrate on two, since they are so closely bound up with my themes here. The first is the loss of a religious language in English.

In a long critique of modern translations of the Bible, [13] Ian Robinson has made a powerful case for concluding that the Jerusalem Bible, the New English Bible (NEB), and similar attempts to replace the King James version of 1611, are written in a language in which it is all but impossible to be religious, to worship God. The same, he argues in so many words, is true of revisions of the Anglican and Roman Catholic books of prayer. The decision (after Vatican II) to drop Latin as the universal language of Catholic worship in favour of services in the vernacular has always struck me as one of the most bizarre of many Papal whims over the centuries. By this move the Roman Church abandoned the universality of hieratic Latin, which spoke to the huge Catholic diaspora everywhere, and through which it worshipped with one voice; and so the church ceased to have any claim to catholicity, and made the

language of worship mutually incomprehensible to its adherents: Babel was rebuilt overnight. In English, this has resulted in the Lord's Prayer being debased in the RC 'Missalette' into virtual cant:

"Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us your peace in every day. In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety." As Robinson says, these are not 'the words our Saviour gave us':

"I can't imagine a more irreligious wish than to be protected from all anxiety, about, for instance, one's salvation: it is a prayer to be delivered from religious life into hebetude. ... You might as well pray 'let everything be nice' which, on the tenth Sunday after Pentecost, the hapless R.C.'s pretty nearly have to do: 'Grant us such full measure of your grace that we may hasten towards the good things you have promised.' What could such good things be, in Mr Heath's England or President Nixon's America, but an easy life and an automatic annual wage-increase?...

"Is it possible to attend to the Missalette with any depth of concentration? When the new services are most themselves they lull us into the pleasant Sunday slumber of churchiness. How can one wait on God in such words?"

The King James's 'Lead us not into temptation' of the Lord's Prayer becomes, in both the NEB and the Jerusalem Bible, 'Do not bring us to the test.' 'What does that mean?' enquires Robinson. 'One might find out by consulting a commentary; but that suggests the failure of the translation as translation.' In another passage he points to the goofiness of the NEB's attempt on Psalm 69 - 'Save me, O God; for the waters have risen up to my neck!'

"I object not that this is more immediate than the old versions, and not even that it is comic (with its derivation from the cliché 'up to the neck in it') but that the comedy is uncontrolled and unintentional. One is in no doubt about the degree and kind of seriousness of the 1611 version: 'Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul.'"

The Jerusalem Bible (a work of American scholars) too provides lapses into incoherent bathos, as in its version of Genesis: 'The man had intercourse with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain.' 'I have acquired a man with the help of Yahweh,' she said. 'She couldn't say so if she were speaking English,' says Robinson tartly. The words have neither colloquial immediacy nor theological rigour.

SILENCE OF THE LAMBS

Robinson laments the atrophy of religious English, not as some failure of conformity to 'tradition' (the kind of 'tradition' understood by town planners and theme park designers), but as an abandonment of seriousness, and thus as a collapse of the community, continuity and understanding

that give a tradition life and significance - which can exist only in individual lives:

"Religious English is the style of our common language that makes religion possible (or not, as the case may be). Religious English can only make religious seriousness possible to the individual, in whom any religion is not restricted or standardized but perpetually new, unique, and his own; it could not do so, however, without the many generations whose lives have expressed themselves in our language, in the context of the many Christian languages, in their context of history and human nature."

The 1611 English Bible's rightness of style 'can never be only a question of style.' That is to say, style is not some after-market extra bolted on to the meaning of the words to imbue them with elegance or an odor of sanctity; the rhythm, for example, 'is the shape of the meaning... the rhythmic climaxes are the



climaxes of sense'.

"Such rightness of language can only be the result, and the medium, of a great creative effort in life, in this case the collaborative effort of the King James committee. It was a collaboration, too, between the translators and the language they found, inside and outside the Bible - itself the outcome of earlier collaborative effort. The result is a language of religion in which God can be spoken of; [one that] 'only yesterday... controlled our speech, and provided a measure for high seriousness.'"

In contrast, the language of the NEB and the new prayer books has emptied itself of any sense of the sacred: it offers no way to approach, imagine, or pray to anything recognizably superhuman, dread, or divine; in Henry Gifford's words, it is 'the language of sedentary men who have lost the capacity to see and touch'.

"St Paul in the Authorized Version is an impressive though difficult writer.... 'Be not deceived; God is not mocked...' Today he rattles this out on the keys of his typewriter: 'Make no mistake

11 Phillip Lloyd-Lewis, letter, 'OnLine' section of the *Guardian*, 30 March 1995.

12 F.R. Leavis, 'Justifying One's Valuation of Blake', *The Human World* No 7, May 1972.

13 Ian Robinson, *The Survival of English*, Cambridge University Press 1973. See Chapter 2, 'Religious English', pages 22-65.

14 Prof. Henry Gifford, 'English Ought to be Kept Down', *Essays in Criticism*, Vol XI (1961), pages 466-70; quoted by Robinson, op. cit.

William Blake's depiction of Newton placing his compasses 'upon the face of the deep'.

Blake's rage at the reductionism of Science has served rebels, mystics, New Agers and social critics well.

16 Dennis Stacy, 'Abductions and Abortions, *Bulletin of Anomalous Experience*, Vol 3 No 5 (1992); Dennis Stacy, 'Alien Abortions, *Avenging Angels*', *Magonia* No 44 (1992).

16 One could argue - the large-headed, big-eyed alien having a long history in science fiction - that the association in abduction lore of aliens and babies is derived from a pre-existing image. In particular, the repeated image of a fetus, coupling the human adventure into space and rebirth, in Stanley Kubrick's 1969 movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* comes to mind. Nonetheless, Stacy's hypothesis brings out the inextricability of the aliens' alleged interest in humanity and those humans' own conflicts over sex and reproduction. I discuss Stacy's analysis in terms of a mythic restatement, in appropriate contemporary dress, of the shamanic process of spiritual rebirth, in *Alien Abductions*, Barnes & Noble (USA)/Blandford (UK) 1998. (Due for publication in April '98; end of commercial)

17 The best and pithiest summary of whose principles in human terms in English remains the marriage service in Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer. The Jewish service confines itself to celebration (and includes the reading of the couple's marriage contract). The Islamic service is positively perfunctory, but then so are Islamic divorce proceedings.

18 By the early 1980s even the service of one's country in battle had been denuded of traditional sense. Mrs Thatcher, praising those who fought and died in recapturing the Falkland Islands, could bring herself to speak of no more than their exemplary 'training' and 'professionalism'. Gallantry, courage, bravery, valor, the resolution to meet death - these were words and ideas beyond her power to conjure.

19 T.S. Eliot, 'Fragment of an Agon', *Collected Poems 1909-1962*, Faber & Faber 1963, page 131. A little later (page 133) the character who speaks these lines is entirely explicit about their import: 'Life is death.' Cf. 'that which is only living / Can only die.' in Eliot's 'Burnt Norton', *Four Quartets* (op. cit. page 194), quoted below.

about this: God is not to be fooled... '...Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?' Christ asks in the Authorized Version (which follows Tyndale). 'Are not sparrows two a penny?' is wrong, because 'two a penny is a cliché; like the pennies that drop, and are offered for thoughts, the coin has no existence.' [14]

The failure of style, the combination of smug journalistic cliché and an incapacity for wonder that amounts to hubris inevitably leads to a draining-out of any sense of the miraculous, too. '[In the NEB] Matthew's miracles are about as cheap as his sparrows,' comments Robinson, and:

"...the new versions make nonsense of the miracles by placing the centre of truth outside religion. If the only possible world is our world of newspapers and commonsense, then the miracles are not merely impossible; they are mischievous impostures. ...For the first Christians the belief [in the miracles, including the Resurrection] was the centre, triumphing, perhaps a little madly, over what everybody knows. It is this anti-commonsense (and potentially evil as well as potentially good) power of the Bible that is present in the old versions and quite missing from the new."

The failure of modern translators of the Bible into English, and their cohorts who write modern prayer books, to produce a credible (or faith-ful) religious style represents a several collapse. For while it is impossible to be religious in this language (and so its style disinherits those who come after), this can be so only because of a failure of apprehension (of more than language or style) on the part of the translators. And they are of their age, with lives beyond the library and the cloister. They could not have produced what they did unless their age had itself lost its bearings, which are centralities of belief and conviction, whose absence the language reflects. Modern religious English is tongued not 'with fire beyond the language of the living' but with uncertainty, if not actual doubt, as to its meaning. The line between that and a pressing presentiment of meaninglessness is almost too thin to draw.

BIRTH, COPULATION AND DEATH

A sense of meaning in existence is critical to a human sense of wholeness; better to suffer misery that means something than vacant joy. No less central to being human is sexuality, which is inescapable in a way that even religious intuitions are not because it is rooted in a biological imperative. The evaporation (or extraction) of a sense of meaning from sexual behavior and language is the second symptom of an existential void at the centre of modern Western culture that I want to discuss.

Precisely because sexuality is ineluctable, and yet peculiar to each individual, it is difficult at the best of times to analyse it. To make matters more in-

tractable, I want to articulate a sense that sexuality has been trivialized and mechanized in recent decades. With only a few hundred words to spare, two instances of this shift in sensibility will have to hold the pass. I hope to illustrate that in discussions of sexuality there is a parallel to the dissolution of a language fit for religion. I will then deal with the consequences of the frustrations arising from the thwarting of both these means of expression.

In his 1992 articles^[15] proposing an 'abortion anxiety hypothesis' to account for the prevalence of foetal imagery in abductions, Dennis Stacy noted that since 1972 in the USA, some 30 million women had had abortions. I discovered from US Census statistics that, in 1993, about 78 million women were of child-bearing age or had been since 1972. These two data together mean that in those 21 years nearly four in 10 women had abortions. Stacy also quoted polls showing that Americans held deeply-felt yet apparently incompatible and contradictory opinions on abortion. While 73 per cent supported abortion rights, 77 per cent viewed the operation as a form of murder. These figures can mean only one thing: that most people managed to endorse both ideas at once. Clearly, there is fertile ground here for internal conflict, guilt and shame.^[16]

Yet the pro- and anti-abortion arguments have never touched on the central problems raised by these paradoxical attitudes. By and large, the arguments for abortion on both sides of the Atlantic are political ('a woman's right to choose' - men, apparently, having no right to an opinion on the fate of their offspring) or economic. Moral questions are not faced. Nor are they faced by the so-called 'pro-life' campaigners except in absolutist and often sentimental terms. Neither party attempts to advance its case in terms of the meaning of sex within the relationship that led to the pregnancy (rape victims aside, and they are a minority among those seeking abortion). The effect is to consolidate a divorce of sex from procreation - the consequence that gave sexual encounters meaning and purpose, and that also imbued them with danger and adventure - that has been in process since before the 1960s. That divorce assumes *a priori* a disjunction of sex from passion, and from responsible, social responses to such distinctively human attributes.

The acceptance of abortion 'on demand', which for a huge majority of Americans at least entails simultaneously acquiescing in a form of murder, surely signals a sea-change in the generally perceived meaning of sex, the necessary prelude to conception. Sexual passion can be divine or demonic, and its disruptions have traditionally been encircled, given form and meaning and moral context, by the concept of marriage,^[17] part of whose meaning is the nurture of children. This alteration in sensibility reduces

procreation to a problem of mechanics, and leaves those who partake in abortion no language (no world of meaning) with which to cope with the consequences, which are not solely emotional.

Before abortion could be contemplated as a 'right', sexuality - and specifically sexual intercourse - had to be deprived of meaning. Nowhere is that operation plainer than in the tabloid press (British tabloids illustrate this best) and in the plethora of guides to sexual pleasure and - hardly removed from either in principle - 'soft' pornographic ephemera now available.

In these, sex is hardly distinguishable from off-road racing: 'performance', 'technique' and 'satisfaction' are all that are required to get you over the bumpy bits. Whether this competitive sport occurs inside a relationship of one human being to another, and what it might denote there from love to madness, remain unexplored.^[18] Sex is reduced to a higher - and by implication measurable - form of masturbation: the self-absorbed infantilism that Aldous Huxley prophesied in *Brave New World*. Perhaps the worthy intention was to purge sexuality of misplaced shame; but, if so, something more profound has been lost in the process. It is one of the mantras of this new sexual enlightenment that guilt, an essentially communal attribute, must not trammel any of its transactions. Conscience, one of the more complex fruits of social life, is thereby abandoned too.

This is a world of isolates, in which life is shriveled to 'Birth, copulation and death. That's all, that's all, that's all, that's all' [19] - which is mere existence, as of brute animals, not human life, and bereft of meaning, purpose, and potential. Even dogs, which are pack animals, are able to manifest guilt as a badge of their social being.

None of what I have said here should be construed as a dewy-eyed illusion that in former times all individuals were paragons of chastity and virtue and all marriages were filled with love, light and 'happiness'. Cranmer, after all, promised no such thing in his prayer book, and neither did those taking the vows he prescribed. The point is that in an inclusive language of the fully human forms of birth, copulation and death, we find initiation, marriage, the building of love, procreation, and funeral rites. In that language even a living hell can have significance, and there are standards by which hell or paradise on Earth can be judged.

But what once demonstrably informed that language seems to be all but lost to us. Meaning is drained from a condition - no matter what its 'orientation' - that is a defining fact of our lives; and we have adopted impoverished, indeed anti-creative terms in which to speak to that condition. 'We may reduce the human realities represented by words like *marriage* and *burial* to nonsense,' writes Ian Robinson, 'but without the possibilities

they express there is no human life.' [20]

Lacking an outlet in the shared contemporary language, any sense of those 'human realities' will, like any other form of energy, seek expression elsewhere, in some other outward form. The UFO mythos has provided a symbolic language and, for some, a public platform through which an inarticulate religious drive and a tacit recognition of our general, cultural confusions about sexuality and its consequences can be discharged. The grotesque irony is that the symbolic terms are taken literally by those least conscious of their own investment in the religious aspect of this enterprise.

TOO MUCH OF NOTHING

Our civilization, Dr Leavis observed 'has, almost overnight, ceased to believe in its own assumptions and recoils nihilistically against itself.' [21] Leavis's criticism of what he called 'technologico-Benthamite civilization' was that of a fully humane intellectual, and was deeply felt. When placed beside the kind of commentary exemplified by Leavis and Robinson, the abduction scenario (if not the entire UFO syndrome) can be seen as a visionary dramatization of the unquiet desperation of the disinherited and disenfranchised who have been deprived of an adequate or appropriate vocabulary (both verbal and emotional) in which to articulate a sense of loss and lack. Wittgenstein's dictum: *Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen* [22] could be adapted for the present discussion as follows: 'What one cannot say will be acted out.' The Ufological Religion and the abduction scenario in particular act out an inarticulacy, and a frustration, over religion and sexuality. And, as we shall see, crashed-saucer tales act out, or speak the unspeakable about, current and related intuitions and confusions about science and scientism.

Nihilism is abroad in our culture, according to the critics I have cited. Yet Viktor Frankl believed that the antithesis of nihilism, the 'will to meaning', is possibly more powerful than any other human impulse; and Frankl - whose branch of psychotherapy has been strangely ignored in Britain and the USA - came to that conclusion by finding meaning and purpose in existence as a prisoner in Auschwitz, one of the 20th century's many synonyms for hell. Testimony from such experience is not easily scorned. And doesn't this sound like a blueprint for the collapse of sense in religious and sexual terms that I've pointed to:

'Nihilism has held a distorting mirror with a distorted image in front of [our] eyes, according to which [we] seem to be either an automaton of reflexes, a bundle of drives, a psychic mechanism, a plaything of external circumstances or internal conditions, or simply a product of economic environment. I call this sort of nihilism homunculum; for it misinterprets

and misunderstands man as being a mere product. ...Parents, teachers, scientists and philosophers have taught [us] all too long a time that man is 'nothing but' the resultant of a parallelogram of inner drives and outer forces. ...Man grows according to his interpretations of himself.' [23]

The will to meaning, however, must find something on which to feed. If the possible 'interpretations of himself' presented to a man are nihilistic, he has a fundamental existential choice: to persist in his condition and become narcissistic (the dominant cultural idiom of our era, I have argued) or to look outside himself. How he frames that 'outside' will depend on the culture in which he finds himself. Despite all inner good will, the 'outside' may remain narcissistic. Frankl again sets the context and makes a further crucial point:

'Apparently, man must have an aim towards which he can constantly direct his life. He must accomplish concrete, personal tasks and fulfil concrete, personal demands; he must realize that unique meaning which each of us has to fulfil. Therefore I consider it misleading to speak of 'self-fulfilment' and 'self-realization'. For what is demanded of man is not primarily fulfilment or realization of himself, but the actualization of specific

tasks in his world - and only to the degree to which he accomplishes this actualization will he also fulfil himself: not *per intentionem* but *per effectum*. [24]

Such words may not go down well in California or on Lindisfarne. (Such is life.) But even if a culture is sufficiently powerful or addictive to circumscribe the attempt to seek some sense of meaning outside it, it may contain some accommodating grit on which a potential pearl may grow. So it has been with the Ufological Religion: the grit is the American Religion which, we may recall Harold Bloom notes, 'can establish itself within nearly any outward form.'

We may also note here that the visionary aspect of religion, always denied by Science, also embarrasses the new reductionist enlightenment, but is accommodated by both American and Ufological Religion. Which is to say: if one cultural form cannot accommodate this 'technology of consciousness', another will be found in which it has sense and meaning. If such matters cannot be brought into mundane consciousness by being spoken of, because they are outlawed by contemporary language, they may have to be acted out in states of being that are also outlawed by our culture: John Dominic Crossan comments, in a chapter one would like to reproduce in

20 Robinson, op. cit.

21 F.R. Leavis, *The Living Principle*, Chatto & Windus 1975, page 7.

22 'What one cannot say, about that one must be silent': Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Proposition 7. Basil Blackwell 1960.

23 Viktor E. Frankl, *From Death Camp to Existentialism*, [revised and enlarged as *Man's Search for Meaning*, 1964], Beacon Press (USA) 1959, page 105. On page 109 Frankl notes: 'And let us not forget, homunculum can make history - has already done so. We have only to remember how in recent history the concept of man as nothing but the product of heredity and environment - or, as it was then termed blood and soil - provoked us all into enormous disasters. I believe it to be a straight path from that homunculum image of man to the gas chambers of Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Maidanek.'

24 *Ibidem*, page 100.



Francisco de Goya y Lucientes' lithograph *The sleep of reason brings forth monsters* presents a nice ambiguity: do the monsters come when reason sleeps, or is reason the slumber that turns to nightmare? To the cynic or sceptic, the UFO myth may seem to embody the first, and express the second

25 John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: a revolutionary biography*, HarperSanFrancisco 1994, page 88. (As noted, the whole chapter deserves looking up.)

26 The first version of this paper was written in the days following the Oklahoma bombing on 19 April 1995. In it, I asked, at this point: What rough beast slouched into Oklahoma City this week? I next elaborated the argument a little less than a year later, in the shadow of the murder of 16 infant children and their teacher by Thomas Hamilton in Dunblane, Scotland, on 13 March 1996, an act that has been roundly denounced as 'evil' from nearly all quarters. From word on relevant grapevines, it appears to be at least possible that Hamilton was sinned against in whispered calumnies before himself sinning through an access of suicidal frustration. Other than the slaughter of innocents, there is no connection between the two cases. The futile Oklahoma bombing was driven by a set of nihilistic beliefs whose links to the crankiest ends of ufology are unnerving (see 'A Plague of Aliens', *Magonia* 60, November 1997), and was inspired by the Federal assault at Waco, TX, in 1993, mythologized on the American far right as the defining moment of government gone out of control. Hamilton's act on the other hand has no such immediately apparent cultural fuel. From media and political reaction to the Dunblane killings one can only conclude that direct moral accountability has become anathema in British culture. Hamilton, being dead by his own hand, cannot answer for his act, and so his means of destruction have become demonized. The wish to find evil is very strong. One can discern it in the Oklahoma bombing; in Dunblane, the rage of a mind at the end of its tether prevailed, perhaps nourished by a wider wickedness. But what has gone on trial and been condemned is an inert piece of precision engineering, and two British governments rejected the best available research in reaching the decision to disarm civilians. Waco, Oklahoma City and Dunblane saw terrible events, terrible not least because at face value they are mystifying. Reactions to incomprehensible circumstances are rarely scientific, or even very rational, and most of science is mystifying to most people. Science is - or 'They' are - easy to denounce.

27 Quotation 2 is, of course, paranormalist folklore. The ostensibly scientific evidence for any anomalous phenomena remains questionable, and at best in limbo.

28 So we find Mr Ronald Pearson, a retired British engineer, writing reams of equations based on Newtonian mechanics that, he says, prove there is life after death. Mr Pearson is happy that his calculations involve the reinstatement of the 'ether' as a universal medium and demand the dismissal of Einstein's theories of relativity. Not surprisingly, despite many attempts, his work remains unpublished in any recognised, refereed scientific journal. He is, however, endorsed by the British Spiritualist monthly *Psychic World*, and championed there and elsewhere by Mr Michael Roll and his one-man Campaign for Philosophical Freedom. Mr Roll is naturally convinced that a conspiracy of silence, driven by an unusual alliance between Science and the Church (both perceived as monolithic), is in play to suppress Mr Pearson's world-shaking discoveries.

full:

"Trance is... a perfectly natural human experience, but its control is a perfectly natural human necessity. Societies that have such processes do not need to apologize for themselves. Societies that have no such procedures may have to consider whether there is such a thing as unhealthy trance deprivation or pathological trance substitution within their borders. It may well be the absence rather than the presence of trance that is pathological". [25]

And I persist in finding it significant that the Roswell myth was revived (thereby refreshing ufological conspiracy theories), the abduction scenario was received with new fervour, and AIDS emerged - all more or less together, after an endless decade of dispiriting shocks to American self-confidence. One could hardly have asked for a riper or more receptive historical moment for a system of self-lacerating beliefs to emerge. The Moral Majority gained real political power at the same time and is part of the same response.

So we find ourselves in an age when God and humanism both have been seen to fail. Where, the disinherited modern mind will ask, was God, already reeling under the onslaught of the Western intellect, at Passchendaele, Treblinka, Nagasaki (which was the most Christian city in Japan)? The bomb was dropped and in the terrible light of that revelation the politicians saw that it was good. In stark contrast, bombs were not dropped on the railway lines feeding the Nazi death factories in Eastern Europe, because the politicians saw no advantage in doing so.

God let these things happen, but so did people. And they still do. Side by side with the march of science and the intuition of meaninglessness, the dreadful catalogue of butchery has continued to unfurl, from Mao's China to the Gulag Archipelago, from My Lai to Pol Pot's killing fields, from Yugoslavia to Rwanda. [26]

We lack a beneficent God and are surrounded by fellows whose capacity for evil has so overwhelmed the imagination that - ironically, in the age of Freud - humanity has become incomprehensible to itself. The blankness is compounded by a culture that implicitly celebrates, and cannot escape, nihilism: as I hope I have illustrated with the examples of the regressive languages of religion and sexuality in present-day English. In such circumstances, one might indeed look about in some desperation for something that really is dependable.

LOVE AND HATE

In one of the paradoxes of our age, it is here that the scientists troop back on stage. Science at least seems to offer a kind of certainty, and honesty in the search for the truth. Even for paranormalists the 'closed and blinkered' mind of science is still the touchstone of reality

and approval. The insight has been confirmed by responses to market research in the 1980s and '90s into attitudes toward 'the paranormal'. Over a period of some 15 years, the outlook of those most interested in paranormal and forerun phenomena has remained consistent. 'Believers' detested and reviled Science because of its alleged preconceptions, closed minds and reductionist principles; yet all wanted Science to take claims for the paranormal seriously and felt that the *imprimatur* of Science would confirm the reality of the phenomena.

The apparent paradox at the heart of these findings is expressed in three attitudes (or impressions) exposed by the research. These can be paraphrased as generic quotations:

- 1 - "Scientists are narrow-minded and prejudiced against anything that threatens their world-view, and this shows in the way they refuse to accept the existence of paranormal phenomena."
- 2 - "There is good scientific evidence that proves the reality of many paranormal phenomena."
- 3 - "Of course this field is littered with frauds and hoaxes. They should be discovered, exposed and weeded out. But just one proven case of [insert phenomenon of choice] would prove that the paranormal exists and would force science to alter its fundamental assumptions."

Quotations 1 and 2 appear to contradict each other.^[27] On the one hand, believers reject Science (by which they really mean Scientism, as noted earlier), and yet science (real science, with no initial capital) - or scientific approval - remains a benchmark for the reality and acceptability of paranormal phenomena. Where it touches on science, Quotation 3 is both true - the laws of physics would be upset by definitive proof of, say, psychokinesis - and indicative of the rage revealed in Quotation 1: that the world and its intellectual guardians 'oppose the paranormal'. Even so, at a popular level (regardless of class or education) there is little doubt that there is 'something to it'.

Asking scientists to accommodate allegedly paranormal phenomena - which are rarely if ever amenable to the scientific method of investigation - amounts to asking them to abandon their perception of the laws of nature. This is not about to happen. Science, like an implacable god, remains the ultimate standard bearer even though it can never be satisfied (or propitiated). To endorse such a lost cause suggests a bent for martyrdom.^[28] At the same time, Science has opened up a wondrous world - made the world more magical, partly by informing us of the astonishing intricacy of nature. Today Dr Johnson might kick his stone with rather less certainty, to prove the solid, bluff, physical reality of things. For both cosmology and quantum physics now put us on the edge of an immaterial Otherworld, whose apparent attributes

have swiftly, if mistakenly, been hijacked by persons seeking scientific justification for their mystical inclinations. At the same time, there is a further twist of the knife in the martyr's breast. The Big Bang and the 'new' physics reduce the world to a set of blind and capricious operations whose only certainties amount to a kind of cosmic lottery: namely, mathematical probability. So even as we are breathless in wonder, we may be gasping in horror.

The ambivalence toward Science (which is always caricatured as an immovable monolith) makes sense of the otherwise rather surprising endorsement of skepticism in Quotation 3. Well-conducted debunking that is seen to start out from a position of impartiality is well-received by believers for two reasons. First, in accepting it they manifest (to their satisfaction, at least) how unbiased they truly are. Second, it strengthens their faith in the cases that remain unassailed - which, because unexplained, appear to gain in impenetrability.

At the same time, it is a fundamental characteristic of believers that they do not follow (indeed will even denounce) the rules of thumb of scientists: the reductionist principle of Occam's razor; the informal principle that 'extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence'; the principle of the falsifiable hypothesis; and - most conspicuously - that reports of phenomena that appear to contradict the laws of nature may be assumed to be inaccurate until proven otherwise. Whatever the status accorded science, in paranormalism and in ufology faith overrides logic when dealing with what passes for evidence.

As noted, one can also discern an aspect of the professional victim's cast of mind: a need to be 'on the outside of whatever side there was'. For science, it is patently obvious, is not going to declare its inadequacy before the paranormal, move all its goalposts, redefine itself (as, for instance, Dr John Mack would seem to expect) and investigate what is not amenable to the scientific method. One wonders what would happen to these people's *Weltanschauung* (world view) if their wishes were granted, for the satisfaction gained in the game ('transaction') of decrying Science seems to outweigh any that might accrue from the essentially political victory that is ostensibly being sought. This relates directly to the elements of martyrdom and masochism noted in the Ufological Religion.

So we have another paradox. On one hand, Science appears to offer eternal truths - laws far more trustworthy than any scroll of Torah has proved to be in the last 100 years or more. And - ideally - science is utterly disinterested and impartial in its mode of investigation and its findings. Joseph Wright of Derby knew this: look at the impersonal faces of the scientists in his paintings.

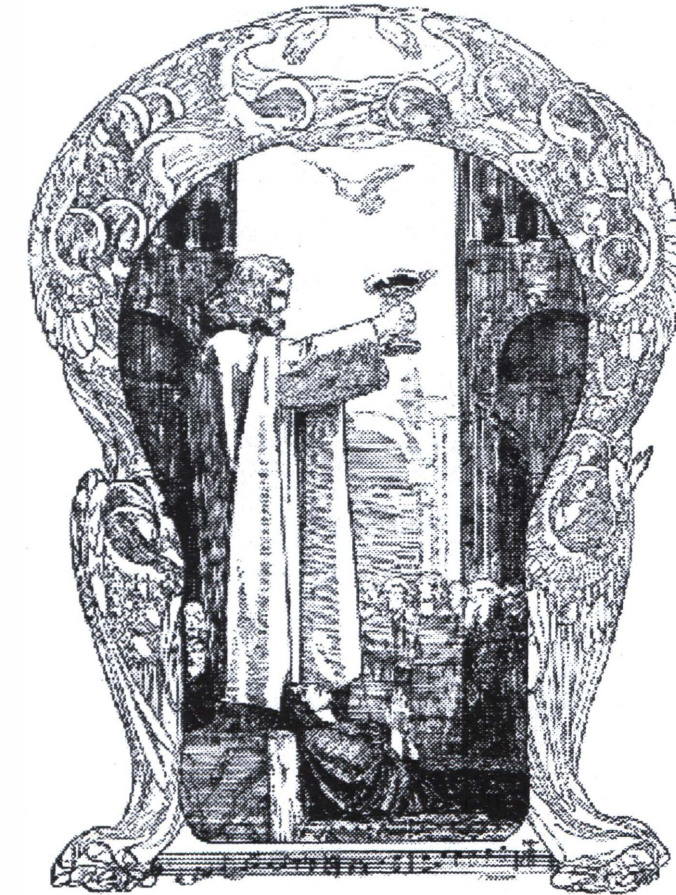
But there is the rub. For on the other hand, it is crucial to this disin-

terestedness that Science has no truck with morals, no dimensions beyond mensuration and cold logic. Science does not, cannot, address the life of the spirit: neither of the human spirit, 'unappeased and peregrine', that recognizes that what is of value in human life cannot be quantified, nor the transcendent, spiritual life, which extends to the visionary. It cannot recognize either that the alternative is mere existence, in which 'that which is only living / Can only die', in T.S. Eliot's phrase. And in the hands of a proselytizing atheist like Richard Dawkins, a notion of science is deployed to deride any attempt to detect meaning, intelligence or purpose in existence.

Because Science is perceived to be utterly dependable, it is drawn in to the Ufological Religion to replace the certainties once represented by faith. The symbolism of UFO belief is technological, the language of saucerian theology pretends to the scientific (see the writings of Budd Hopkins, *passim*^[29]), and what in other religions would be taken for visionary experiences are deemed materially real events. This borrowing from the wider culture - 'Science is truth, and truth science; this is all ye know, and all ye need to know' - reveals a dependence and a contradiction (a species of dualism) that generate enormous tensions. On a more visible level, the new identity of science with godling is a kind of rebirth or resurrection of both, and a reconsecration of humanity as 'godly' - a theme manifested in the search for 'star children' and (less certainly) alien-human hybrids from 'virgin births'.

Just as Semitic religions require a force of evil and are implicitly Manicheistic,^[30] the Ufological Religion grounds its faith in the caricature of Science that it despises and distrusts but cannot, for the sake of appearing respectably rational, reject; it is a classic double-bind, which could also be called a form of dualism. For Science cannot deal with - an extremist would say it tells lies about - the kind of experience that instinctively we know defines us as human beings. Science *fishes for knowledge*, not wisdom, and it is *maimed* by its lack of ethics (it doesn't have the *balls* to make a stand on principle) and its exclusion of the immaterial. UFO believers love it and hate it for that. Just as - it seems - we love and hate all things that have power over us.

The words I have emphasized here will recur again. And that brings us, finally, to the matter of crashed flying saucers. For who is it that examines, dissects, circumambulates and protects, the crashed flying saucers, but these very same scientists, in their subterranean, Hades-like haunts at Wright-Patterson or Kirtland or Area 51? In this way the crashed-saucer legends express a deep ambivalence toward Science, just as the abduction scenario dramatizes 'inexpressible' apprehensions of religion and sex; but there is also a religious dimen-



The overtly religious equivalent of the crashed saucer stories is the legend of the Holy Grail. They are different expressions of the same thing, each appropriate to the needs of its time and place

sion to the crashed-saucer myth.

INTO THE WASTELAND

If what fuels the UFO syndrome is religious at heart, the crashed-saucer legends should have a parallel in religious lore. And the corollary ought to be apparent without having to descend to the level usually frequented by the mind of M. Claude Lévi-Strauss.^[31]

Incontrovertible, material evidence, that a saucer had crashed, and that aliens had been retrieved from the wreckage, would constitute irrefutable proof of the reality of the UFO myth, even of the ETH. For saucerians, it would make all things right - and the decades-long persecution of the martyrs of ufology would be justified and redeemed; the arguments, even within ufology, would have to stop. Sceptics and curmudgeons alike could be taken swiftly, and with a clear conscience, to the stake.

There is a similar object in Semitic religious mythology: Christianity has a wonderfully provocative myth that

seems to fit the bill most closely. As the UFO pageant has emerged in its most elaborate forms in Christian societies, this should not greatly surprise us, and I feel reasonably comfortable in offering it to you. The overtly religious equivalent of the crashed saucer stories is the legend of the Holy Grail. They are different expressions of the same thing, each appropriate to the needs of its time and place. I don't know of an equivalent in Islam, and the only proposed candidate in Judaism is distinctly weak. John Matthews^[32] and Emma Jung^[33] both suggest that in Judaism a role akin to the Grail is taken by the *Shekinah*, but this seems to me to reify that concept of the 'presence' of God to an extent that Jewish tradition and teaching fail to support. (Its nearer approximate counterpart in Christianity is the Holy Spirit.)

In broad outline, both the Grail and the crashed saucers are first found in open wastelands, deserts and high places; God reveals himself in deserts, an orthodox Jewish tradition runs,

29 Hopkins would no doubt characterize this present dissertation as an instance of what he calls 'stewpot thinking - an obstacle to science'. To which (see *Magonia* 59, page 6) John Harney has provided the compleat response: 'What do the activities and ludicrous speculations of Hopkins and the other abduction enthusiasts have to do with science?'

30 The Tractarian Dr Edward Pusey (1800-82) declared: 'Those who deny eternal punishment as inconsistent with the attributes of God do not really believe in the same God that Jesus revealed.' Quoted in Eric Maple, *The Domain of Devils*, (Robert Hale 1966) Pan 1969, page 173. Maple quotes the 19th-century German theologian Sartorius in the same vein: 'He who denies Satan cannot truly confess Christ', and adds: 'A typical Scottish sentiment of that time was that 'A Kirk without a Hell is not worth a damn'.

31 Lévi-Strauss was right about one thing, however, and that was the need to take an inclusive view of a myth in order to assess its significance and its meaning. Some ufologists seem to imagine that 'ufology' consists of no more than the bits they find intellectually attractive, or the bits discussed by relatively rational ufologists. So it is offered as part of the UFO myth that ufology is not currently dominated by the ETH, despite the clear presumption in popular culture and tavern discourse (and supported by opinion polls) that to most people most of the time 'UFOs/flying saucers' means 'spacecraft' and that 'aliens' means 'ET humanoids' and, particularly, Grays.

32 John Matthews, *The Grail Tradition*, Element 1990, pages 55-7. Matthews also suggests an equivalence of the Grail with the derivative Sufi Sakina and the Islamic mutation of Sophia, which derives from Gnosticism. I think this is pushing the envelope to bursting.

33 Emma Jung & Marie-Louise von Franz, *The Grail Legend*, Sigo 1986, page 383.

34 Cf. Morris Adler, *The World of the Talmud*, Schocken (New York) 1963, page 98.

35 Transliterated: Iesus Christos Theou Huios Soter (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior). This works better in Greek.

36 Joseph Campbell, *Creative Mythology* (1968), Penguin 1980, page 425.

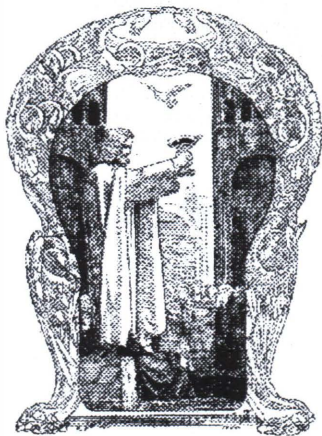
37 See A.L. Lloyd, *Folk Song in England*, Paladin 1975, pages 142-154, for a summary of the origins of these ancient tales. 'Lady Isabel...' has been traced to a Siberian source dating to at least 300BCE. Literalists who scoff at folkloric interpretations of the abduction syndrome would do well to acquaint themselves with such concrete instances of the tenacity of mythic ways of thinking, and their adaptation to circumstances.

38 Campbell, op. cit., pages 420-1. See pages 123-428 for the full background, including related Grail imagery in Celtic mythology. Intriguingly enough, one series of interesting (and beautifully coloured) sculptures made by Budd Hopkins is called 'Ixions'.

39 Campbell, op. cit., page 430.

40 Matthews, op. cit., page 43; and page 84. Matthews also observes (page 95) that 'the failure at the heart of the Arthurian kingdom, which is illustrated by the Waste Land, has become more directly linked with the actions of Arthur himself, [and his] failure of will... and sovereignty ...and until both are healed, by the finding of the Grail, the sickness will not be cured.' Cf. the Jewish concept of the dependence of God on humanity to fulfill a mutual covenant, and Note 4, above.

41 Caitlin Matthews, *Arthur and the Sovereignty of Britain*, Arkana 1989, pages 188-228.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Bob Rickard of *Fortean Times* for trusting his instincts and first inviting me to expound on these themes at the FT UnConvention 1995; to Zoé Blackler, secretary of the University of London Graduates' Society for providing the opportunity to discuss them further with her members; and to John Rimmer for letting me expand on them here - and for tolerating my chaotic subversions of his task as editor as graciously as he has the ataxic interventions of the Royal Mule. Danielle Rose, Dr Richard Baxter and Jeff King gave me very useful leads. I owe special thanks to Lesley Riley for her ever-reliable advice and guidance on the structure of this last, and most intractable, part of my argument.

because they are accessible to all, and God is not the exclusive property of the Jews but of all mankind.^[34] But, once retrieved, they are hidden in secret places accessible only to an elect. The Grail is kept by a *maimed, immortal, Fisher King*. The saucers and captured aliens are guarded by scientists: *morally crippled fishers after knowledge who utter eternal truths and rule our intellectual activity*.

No modern knight on a ufological quest has infiltrated Hangar 18 or Dreamland, seen the evidence, and lived both to tell the tale and be believed. So there isn't a counterpart (yet) of the successful Grail Quest in ufology: the Sir Percival of the Mystic Saucer has yet to emerge. The tale, especially as told by Wolfram von Eschenbach, of how Parzifal achieved the Grail but did not himself pay the customary price and become an agonized immortal, is fascinating. But I wonder whether it will ever be told in ufological terms.

HOLY SAUCER

When one looks more closely at the Grail legend, the correlations with the religious crashed-saucer legend are quite uncanny. As a young man, the keeper of the Grail, Anfortas, went looking for knightly adventures rather than concentrate on the responsibilities of his spiritual inheritance. He met a heathen knight, easily enough identified as a symbol of Nature, jousted with him, and caught a poisoned spear through the testicles. The doctors did their best, but when Anfortas beheld the Grail, the pain of his wound increased - for by gazing on this spiritual Ultimate he had become immortal. Anfortas, like Science, had neglected his true, moral and spiritual, duty to his fellow man, gained a privilege we all secretly hanker for, and paid a terrible price. His fishing - for a single magic fish that will feed an entire company of guests - is limited by his pain, and what he actually catches can barely provision his own household.

Do I need to spell out the correspondences with the scientific hope for an 'answer to everything', and the eternal but unsatisfying, un-nourishing truths that it harvests from the waters of creation? And observe too the parallels with Jesus of Nazareth: the wound (from the heathen Longinus's spear), the 'fisher of men' whose sacred acronym was *Ichthus*, fish.^[35] Joseph Campbell notes: 'The crown of thorns is a counterpart of the Bodhisattva's turning wheel, and the Cross, of the wheel of Ixion [see below]. Christ's role as the Man of Sorrows... corresponds to the Grail King in torture.' [36]

Campbell also makes a convincing case that the Grail - which is variously a 'wide and slightly deep' dish, a cup, even a stone, and in many traditions a spinning wheel, but always silver - is symbolically and inextricably related to the Moon. The Moon, like your average UFO, is a silver disk. Even Doris Day could sing that connection. The shining circularity of

the Grail can be traced right back (like the Bluebeard legend and the ballad *Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight* [37]) to Indo-European roots, which are still visible in the Hindu epic of the *Panchatantra*. There, the ancestor of the Grail is a wheel whirling on a man's head; it is torture to endure, but confers immortality.

Campbell spells out the symbolism of the disc:

"The image of the turning spoked wheel, which in the earlier period had been symbolic of the world's glory, ...became a sign, on the one hand, of the wheeling round of sorrow, and, on the other, release in the sunlike doctrine of illumination. And in the classical world the turning spoked wheel appeared also at this time as an emblem... of life's defeat and pain... in the image of Ixion, bound by Zeus to a blazing wheel of eight spokes, to be sent whirling for all time through the air." [38] And where did it come from? According to Von Eschenbach: 'A host of angels left it on the Earth, then flew off, high above the stars.'

Von Eschenbach's Grail is not the cup used at the Last Supper, as in other versions of the legend, but a magnificent emerald. It had been set in the crown of Lucifer and was dislodged either during the war in heaven or when the rebel angel finally fell, dropping 'from the zenith like a falling star'. 'By the power of that stone,' we read in Wolfram, 'the phoenix burns and becomes ashes, but the ashes restore it speedily to life. ...Such virtue does it communicate to man that flesh and bones grow young at once.' [39]

John Matthews remarks of these qualities of the Grail that 'it gives life and death, joy and suffering, because it is a vessel, an empty vessel capable of being filled by anything', and elsewhere calls it 'the symbol that unites all opposites'. [40] I doubt there is any direct influence from this to the Ufological Religion, but the dualism, paradox and power of resurrection in the Grail seen here set off some lively hares carrying questions about the creative processes of mythic thought.

So too does the knowledge that, according to several sources, the Grail temple or castle ('that many seek but none has found; for he who seeks will not find it,' Parzifal's cousin Sigune says) had a tendency to spin, and that (in Albrecht von Scharfenburg's version) while the castle was being built the Grail itself floated in the air over Mount Salvation. Caitlin Matthews cites several more examples and relates them to the Celtic image of the Wheel of Life and Death and the medieval Wheel of Fortune, and notes that the various embodiments of Lord of the Wheel in Celtic mythology are also the Lord of Wild Things and the Lord of Death and Rebirth. One incarnation of this idea is Ireland's *Mog Ruith* ('servant of the wheel'), 'who flew through the air by means of his rowing-wheel - a kind of

air-boat'^[41] (somewhat after the fashion of Hiawatha, another airborne shaman-hero).

Coincidence? Not entirely, I suspect. But - although we have many hints and clues - we know too little at present about the innate symbol-making and mythopoeic structures of the mind to 'prove' an exact correspondence, and perhaps proof will always be elusive. To cynics I can only say that the colloquial thought of the crashed saucer as the 'holy grail of ufology' occurred to me before I began enquiring into the nature of the original Grail.

I may as well deal here with another predictable response, although it comes from a different kind of cynicism - the suggestion that my argument is all backwards: that what I have been presenting - and over which I am, no doubt, in denial - is evidence that aliens have been with us all along. In other words, the Grail is an alien craft, and the Grail legends are distorted - even deliberately manipulated - records or memories of its visitation. This is an outgrowth of the same dreary refusal to give human beings the credit for building the pyramids, a position that ought to end in the argument that Albert Einstein was really a Zeta Reticulan, and that has led to the fatuous proposal that the transistor was back-engineered from alien technology recovered from the 'Roswell' débris. While flipping my beautifully damscened H. Samuel Eversharp Occam razor from my weskit pocket I might opine that this outlook is so self-flagellatory it merely confirms the religiosity of ufology. There really are more interesting things to consider.

THE EMPTY CUP

Ufologically speaking, we have not found the Grail. For all I know there is a Grail Keeper, a present-day Anfortas, a wounded and bemused scientist in charge of one of its invisible shrines, in Ohio or Nevada, pondering the wreckage of the magical, terrifying, addictive Other. But I beg leave to doubt that. For on a level deeper than any subterranean laboratory of the New World Order, we are all Grail keepers, staring in pain and bewilderment at the débris of our spiritual life, which has been brought crashing to Earth, and we are unable to mend it or heal ourselves.

The degree of our degradation as a civilization, the true ruinousness of our predicament, is shown in the way this most contemporary myth speaks to our condition - that is, in its inability to complete itself, to provide a Sir Percival for us. Nor do I see such a thing happening outside the paranoid confines of conspiracy theory. But I suspect there will be no Sir Percival for ufology in any guise. The Ufological Religion will remain as it is, inchoate, locked in its pathological mode of victim, martyr and masochist, deluded that the proof of its truth must take the form of 'solid scientific evidence'.

Gazurmah's Sons

The Psychopathology of the Nazi Saucer Myth

David Sivier

'Men born of men ... for whom natural birth was not enough ... but in their arrogant desire to rise to a 'higher' state of being, were born again in the laboratory ... a homosexual rebirth in metal wombs ... bastards of science.'

Pat Mills and Kevin O'Neill,
Marshal Law Takes Manhattan, Epic Comics, 1989

The past year has seen a resurgence in the old controversy surrounding the origins of Flying Saucers, though for once it is not the hotly debated ETH. Instead, researchers like BUFORA's Tim Matthews have provoked debate by claiming that modern UFOs are, or are based on, secret Nazi flying saucer experiments conducted during the Second World War.

It's an intensely emotive issue as it is intimately tied to the brutality of the Nazi dictatorship, and there are very real dangers to its discussion. First of all, debate surrounding the technology can easily become approval of the technology and its uses. This is something of which Neo-Nazis are well aware, and there is an abundance of evidence to show that the mythology surrounding the saucers' supposed Nazi origins is being used by Fascist groups for propagandistic purposes. The two main sources for the Nazi saucer myth, Wilhelm Landig and Ernst Zundl, are both Nazis seeking to do precisely this. Landig's book, *Goetzen Gegen Thule*, in particular contains a nasty piece of Holocaust revisionism. A similar motive may underlie Renate Vesco's book, *Intercettati Senza Sparare*, translated into English as *Intercept but don't Shoot*. Vesco claims to have been a technician working under the guidance of the Ital-

ian engineer on the project, Giuseppe Belluzzo. This character seems to be a fiction based on the real Giuseppe Belluzzo, an Italian aeronautical engineer and Fascist senator.

When Vesco's work appeared, first as a magazine article in 1969, and then in book form in 1971, Italy was beginning a wave of Fascist terrorism intended to bring down the liberal state. By playing up Fascist technological achievement, Vesco may well have been attempting to win support for the nascent Right. There is the problem here, however, of why flying saucers were being used for these purposes, rather than concrete examples of wartime German technological achievements, such as the V2. Why choose machines which, if they were ever built, seem to have been complete failures? Experimental devices built by Viktor Schauberger and Alexander Lipisch either crashed, or completely

failed to take off. When a working prototype was built, it was allegedly destroyed to prevent it falling into the hands of the advancing Russians and Czechoslovaks. The answer must lie in the myth's ability to fulfil some kind of psychological need both within the minds of Fascists and anti-Fascists.

The first thing to note is that as a myth it is superbly suited for propaganda purposes. Joachim C. Fest notes in his biography of Hitler that up until the very last moment of the War, many Germans were still absolutely convinced that the Fuehrer had a secret weapon which would deliver them from the advancing Allies. Although the modern age of the UFO began two years after the end of the War, it was still close enough to be plausibly claimed as a German secret weapon, especially with its precursors in the wartime Foo fighters. Furthermore, the lack of any firm evidence for their origin as technological

objects in the form of wreckage or an unequivocal piece of saucer technology, coupled to the remoteness of the saucers' supposed bases in Antarctica, means that there is no obvious evidence either against their origin in Nazi technology, except from conclusions drawn from what we know was scientifically possible during the Nazi era. In this vacuum all manner of claims, plausible and ludicrous, can be made, there being just enough material available on aviation experiments within the Third Reich to hint plausibly that such experiments were made. Outside of the Neo-Nazi groups fixated on the Third Reich, the Nation of Islam sees the saucers as a vital part of its racist mythology, though here they serve the movement's founder, W.D. Fard, in his racial war with the Whites.

There is, however, a deeper psychological dimension to the myth, one that goes to the heart of Fascist notions about technology, gender and sexuality.

One of the elements within Fascism has been a fascination with technology. The Italian Futurists, who were one of the movement's precursors and were later absorbed into it, were obsessed with it. 'Futurism is grounded in the complete renewal of human sensibility brought about by the great discoveries of science'. [1]

Technology was to be the new, exciting medium by which patriotic Italians would slough off their obsession with the past and become true members of an energised humanity, filled with 'courage, audacity and revolt' prepared for 'the impending and inevitable identification of man with machine'. It was an aggressive, masculine movement whose watchwords were 'Youth, Speed, Violence!' and which glorified 'war - the world's only hygiene - militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom-bringers ... and contempt for woman'. [2] From the start the aeroplane was celebrated as part of this new, brave, speedy technocratic world.

'We will sing of ... the sleek flight of planes whose propellers chatter in the wind like banners and seem to cheer like an enthusiastic crowd.' [3] 'The Futurist hero was the man of iron, the aviator and the engineer'. [4] The ultimate expression of these ideas was in Marinetti's book, *Mafarka Futurista* (Mafarka the Futurist, 1910), which was the subject of a notorious obscenity trial, thanks to the eponymous hero's possession of an 11 metre long penis which he curled around himself while he slept. His son, Gazurmah, is a giant invisible mechanical bird with wings that embrace the stars. At the end of the book, Mafarka orders his slaves to build him a sailplane, on which he departs for even greater adventures. The identification of aviation with an aggressive, belligerent masculine sexuality is explicit. For Jung, the UFO could also be a masculine symbol, 'in accordance of reports of ... cigar shaped Ufos'. [5]

In all of this there was a complete absence of women. Mafarka was born without a mother, and he, in turn, conceives and bears Gazurmah by himself, in an act of 'exteriorised will'. Futurism followed its artistic predecessor, Symbolism, in having a strong tone of misogyny. This seems to have arisen through a sense of castration, of loss of a role, produced by Edwardian feminist agitation. They preached '(d)isdain for amore (sentimentality or lechery) produced by the greater freedom and erotic ease of women and by the universal exaggeration of female luxury ... The lover has lost all his prestige. Love has lost its absolute worth.' [6] This *fin de siècle* 'crisis in masculinity' produced a vicious backlash in the Fascist and Nazi regimes, which sought to restrict women's roles to the traditional, domestic sphere. The slogan 'children, church and kitchen' accurately sums up their attitudes to women, and the Nazis sought to remove women from places at university, the military, the legal profession, politics and general employment. Like Futurism, the Nazis inveighed against luxury in women, reserving their fury in particular for the lady, 'a frivolous plaything who is superficial and only out for pleasure, who decks herself with tawdry finery and is like a glittering exterior that is hollow and drab within.' [7]

Female sexuality was always a matter of real fear to the radical Right. The occultist Lanz Von Liebenfels, from whom Hitler took most of his racial ideas, felt that women in particular were prone to bestial lusts and preached their subjection to pure Aryan husbands as a necessary corrective. Although Nazi concerns with the proper procreation of the race meant that polygyny and premarital sex were encouraged, these were a serious business beyond mere pleasure. 'Choose a comrade, not a playmate', German girls were lectured on selecting suitable marriage partners.



"We will sing of the sleek flight of planes whose propellers chatter in the wind like banners and seem to cheer like an enthusiastic crowd"

F.T. Marinetti

The ever-present threat of the Jewish incubus was continually held up before their eyes, as shown in the slogans broadcast at the *Bund Deutscher Mäidler* (German Girls' League): *Der Jude ist ihr Unglück* (the Jew is your misfortune). As a necessary discouragement against sexual misadventure, Hitler himself told the assembled maidens to 'be pure, be vigilant, behave!' The Nation of Islam and other Black Islamic sects carry on this Fascist agenda of excluding women from public life. Louis Farrakhan deliberately discouraged women from joining his Million Man March because he felt that their place was at home with their children. UFOs, as Jung noted, could also be a feminine symbol, if they were suitably lens-shaped. In that case, a psychoanalytic approach could consider them as a 'repressed uterus ... coming down from the sky'. [8]

Jung, however, did not accept this view uncritically, posing the problem that if UFOs were an essentially feminine symbol, what did that make their masculine pilots? His solu-

tion was that although sexuality played an important part in the saucer myth, it still was only a part, 'not the whole instigator of the metaphor'. [9] John Keel, on the other hand, noted that '(m)any witnesses have the distinct impression that these entities are actually sexless (androgynous). The males with their long hair, angular faces, and mincing manners suggest they might be hermaphrodites and homosexuals'. [10] before going on to speculate that '(e)xcept for those who might be specially constructed for incubus-succubus activities ... it does appear that our angels and spacemen come from a world without sex'. [11]

This asexuality even finds itself in Nazi and proto-Nazi literature. From his close friendship with August Strindberg, who received a letter from his wife rejecting him because she preferred men with longer penises, Lanz Von Liebenfels considered that possession of small genitals was the mark of the pure Aryan, possibly reflecting his own monasticism and undoubted sexual repression. [12] The Nazi movement as

a whole, because of its stress on belligerent hypermasculinity and comradeship, attracted a large number of homosexuals. Allegedly 75 per cent of the SA were gay, an accusation more recently levelled by the former NF leader John Tyndall to his erstwhile national comrades after the movement's split in 1980. Given the tendency towards homosexuality in Nazism, the appearance of the Gestapo officer who imparts 'philosophical guidance' to Landig's heroes in *Goetzen Gegen Thule* takes on a psychological dimension well beyond that of the mentor-friend. [13] Apart from the long-haired blonde Nordics of the Contactees, the short Greys of the Abductionists lack signs of gender or sexuality, yet this does not seem to prevent their repeated rape of witnesses.

No discussion of Fascistic imagery would be complete without a discussion of the sexual aspect of the abduction myth. If the abduction myth is just a secularized version of the old mythology of the incubus/succubus, so too are the racial theories at the heart of Nazism. Hitler's predecessor, the neo-pagan racist writer Joerg Lanz Von Liebenfels, produced a secularised version of the incubus myth in his work *Theozoologie oder die Kunde von den Sodoms-Aefflingen und dem Goetter-Elektron* (Theo-Zoology or the Lore of the Sodom-Apeelings and the Electron of the Gods). In this he posited that humanity, or at least the primitive Aryan races, had possessed electric organs which gave them the power of telepathy. These powers had atrophied due to the Ancients' addiction to deviant sex with specially bred *Buhlzwerg* - love-pygmyes. In his warped view of the Easter Story, Christ's passion was really about the attempts by the ancient Satanic cults to pervert Him into copulation with the pygmies, rather than a straight-forward narrative of His crucifixion.

Liebenfels was viciously antisemitic, and the hatred expressed for these mythical *Buhlzwerg* soon found a concrete object in Jewry. Hitler and his predecessors fulminated against the way the Jews allegedly sought to adulterate the pure Aryan races with their own degenerate blood, sentiments that find their way into contemporary Christian Identity and Nation of Islam verbal assaults on Jews as 'Khazars' or 'Mongrels'. Hitler in particular was tormented by a recurring nightmare in which a naked blonde German woman was held in chains, while a Jewish butcher approached her from behind. The abduction myth too contains the element of sadistic helplessness and bondage while a demonically imagined 'other' rapes and violates to produce monstrous children.

The Greys, in their dwarfishness and perverse sexuality, are a new race of *Buhlzwerg*, come to tempt and

seducer pure Aryans. This time, they've got the technological upper hand, and they're breeding us. It's been said that 'you become what you fear the most', and Hitler in his fevered combat with miscegenation was quite willing to see suitably blonde children from the conquered races, such as the Poles, kidnapped and raised by Germans as a way of reclaiming allegedly German bloodlines amongst those peoples. The ultimate expression of the Nazi preoccupation with race and biology were the infamous experiments of Dr. Mengele. When the Abduction myth finally arose four decades after the War, it was on this imagery of depraved experimentation that it drew to give a plausible motive for the Greys' agenda of rape and miscegenation.

The Abduction hysteria also coincided with a period of governmental crisis when a series of released documents and scientific discoveries seemed to suggest that the government and big business were carrying on the Nazi agenda. This was shown in the notorious epidemiological, radiological and drug experiments carried out by the government on servicemen, Blacks, and the poorest ranks of society in general and the scandal over Operation Paperclip and other governmental actions by which scientists and other servants of the Nazi regime came to work in the US. Finally, advances in reproductive technology, such as cloning, in vitro fertilisation and artificial wombs, have raised the spectre of government sponsored racial manipulation ever closer. Brave New World seems just around the corner. The attempts by some scientists to produce a technology that would allow men to bear babies, explored humorously in the BBC's play *Frankenstein's Baby* and the Hollywood film *Junior* brings the spectre of homosexual technological birth *qua* Mafarka ever closer. Bastards of science indeed! The latest version of the myth, which sees the Greys as being three feet tall dwarfs produced by failed attempts to clone the Nazi leaders merely makes the myth's metaphorical nature obvious.

Even the UFOs' shape, phallic as it is, suggests its role in procreation, penetrating and fructifying the witness, as Jung realised. [14] This is wholly in line with the essentially religious nature of the phenomenon, as even 'in ancient times the feeling of being 'penetrated' by, or of 'receiving', the god was allegorized by the sexual act.' [15] Following the example of folklore, however, after the victory of Christianity this experience no longer produced demigods and heroes, as in the ancient world, but demons, cambions and changelings. Intercourse with the alien ufonauts now no longer brings beautiful, heroic suitors such as Mme. Klärer's alien lover, nor painless parturition, but painful and terrifying rape. Instead of

birth, the body is further violated through caesarian section, the child ripped from the womb. In early mythologies, the daemons responsible for the violation would have been portrayed in human or animal form. In our modern technological age, they become cloaked in the guise of machines, such as aeroplanes, cars, or, as Jung might have realised, flying saucers.

Paradoxically, in spite of Hitler's vaunted triumphs of German technology, science and mechanization was another strand in the Nazis' web of neurotic fears. At the heart of the Nazi *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) ideas were the idealisation of the peasants and peasant society as the heart and soul of the German people. The first Nazi electoral successes were as representatives of the agrarian classes of Schleswig-Holstein during the agricultural crisis of 1929. In spite of the mechanised terror marshalled by the Reich against its foes and citizens, the Nazi ideal remained a primitive, idealised society of peasants. This agenda continues today in attempts by the Fascist International Third Position to found agrarian colonies in France and Spain. In his early speeches, the newly industrialising giant of America was invoked by Hitler as the epitome of modern urbanism and mass production, a demonic dystopia which would be Germany's fate, too, unless National Socialism intervened to save it. The image of the flying saucer as the technological tool of mechanised procreation would have been as much a nightmare to the Nazis as a dream.

Deeply entwined with these ideas is the notion of racial decadence. Martin Kottmeyer has shown how 19th century evolutionary theories of racial decay influenced Wells to produce the first proto-Grey image in the form of the Eloi. [16] Beyond the strict concerns of evolutionary biology, the image fitted in with broader contemporary literary theories regarding 'Decadence'. This fin de siècle literary movement sought justification for its excesses in the medical and biological literature on hereditary decline and morbid psychological states, such as that offered by Paul Bourget in his *Essais de Psychologie Contemporaine*, published 1883 and 1885. Taking their cues from Lamarck, Moreau and Lombroso, the Decadents saw literary genius as a species of neurological disorder arising from bad heredity, the type of heredity produced by the decline of former great and noble houses as they decayed from the virile splendour of their founders. With their delicate frames and sociological origins in human aristocracy, there is more than a touch of Des Esseintes in the Eloi, especially as the Decadents exalted apathy and ennui among their virtues. Wells' description of this aristocratic future race, small, beautiful, graceful, with

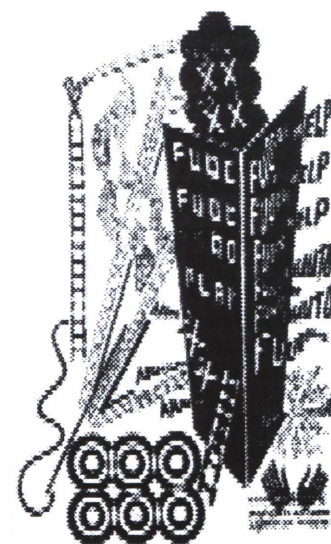
pointed chins and clad in sandals and knee-breeches, seems curiously elfin. This actually was quite in line with speculation which was then emerging that the fairies were a folk-memory of an earlier race that existed before the Celts, which in turn perhaps was a secularised version of the belief that the fairies were really the Druids, who were being punished by God for their idolatry by shrinking until they would become no more than ants. Both traditional and modern, scientific explanations for the fairies had the idea of racial senescence in common, the belief that these elder beings, in their racial twilight and dotage, were declining both in physique and mental powers away from a former human or superhuman state. Folklore and modern biology met head-on in Wells' nightmarish imagination.

Mixed in with these fears of racial senescence may be terror of a more individual type of dotage. Male fairies are usually presented as hideous, wizened old men, like the dwarfs in Disney. Larry Niven's Pak, who like the Greys are asexual creatures with a large cranium, lipless and toothless beak for a mouth and grey in skin tone, are based on his own exaggeration of human aging. They are the monstrous third age of humanity, the Protector, when, after maturity, the individual consumes the fruit tree-of-life, to awaken as a neuter monster bent on racial preservation. The alien Pak are similarly like the faeries and the Greys in being an ancient, earlier race. In their nonsentient form they are *Homo Erecti*. Only the Protectors possess intelligence. Humanity is their children, evolved from mutated forms of Pak breeders after a failed attempt at colonisation. The Paks' loyalty is to their own brood, though, not to their distant cousins on an alien star. They come in powerful spaceships to reclaim their colony and extirpate their racial successors and usurpers. It's thus in Niven's book, published in the mid-seventies, that a science fictional treatment of the themes raised by the Greys most clearly arises: racial and personal senescence and survival coupled with high technology and ruthless expansion. Oh, and the first Pak to make contact with a member of humanity experiments upon him, feeding him tree-of-life to see what would happen. The Pak are, however, of normal height, and powerfully built, but they contain most of the elements of the Grey myth, nonetheless. It is this feeling of being at the mercy of racial elders that adds an urgency to the Fascist exaltation of youth: *mach platz, ihr Alter* (make way, you old one!) can never be viewed on the purely personal level.

Decadence invites reaction, though. Its watchwords of apathy, spleen and powerlessness before encroaching decay are not a comfortable state, and the movements' sexual ex-

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17. Marinetti, F.T., *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism*, 1909.



cesses and over-refinement produced a loud and aggressive opponent in the Futurists who sprang out of it. These, and similar modernistic movements, as we've seen, sought to wrench Italian society out of its 'thoughtful immobility, ecstasy and sleep' through the harsh, white heat of a technological renovation. This *renovatio*, restoration to a previous state of glory and power, was at the heart of all Fascist movements, from Mussolini's hankering after a new Roman Empire, Franco's dream of a Spain of Catholic majesty, and Hitler's nightmare of the Third Reich. Some Decadents, weary of their jaded pleasures, moved beyond it to embrace this reaction. George Viereck and Hans Ewers, two of Germany's most prominent Decadents, became staunch Nazis when the movement emerged in the twenties. The Fairies, with their glittering luxury and languid sensuality as portrayed by the Victorians, were part and parcel of a stagnant order that every good political soldier should seek to overturn. Murder the moonlight!

The same restlessness permeates the end of our century. From the point of view of the puritanical nineties, the sexual and chemical excesses of three decades ago are a source of shame, of bitter political reproach. As the millennium itself looms upon us, the same gnawing desire for a new man, another homo faber, eats away at us, though it's more likely to be the cyborgs of the Extropians than Nietzsche's blonde beasts. The New Age was here before! Compare Fukuyama's 'The End of History' with Marinetti: 'We stand on the last promontory at the end of centuries!' [17] The result is millennial ferment, armed Freikorps against racially decadent *Buhlzwerge* and the saucers they flew in on.

The flying saucer is, then, the perfect expression of Fascist and Nazi ideals and terrors, as a glittering example of Aryan (or Nubian) technological supremacy and aggressive, beligerent masculinity and misogyny. At the same time, it is merely the latest expression of sick racial, sexual, anti-urban and anti-technological fears from which the Nazis themselves suffered and invoked to gain their hold over the German masses. It is this grim fascination which makes the saucers an excellent propaganda tool for the Fascists, and source of terror for the anti-Fascists. The task of the Ufologist should be to cast the cold light of reason on this mass of fears, separating the truth from the fiction, in the hope that once confronted, these myths will evaporate to haunt the world no more.

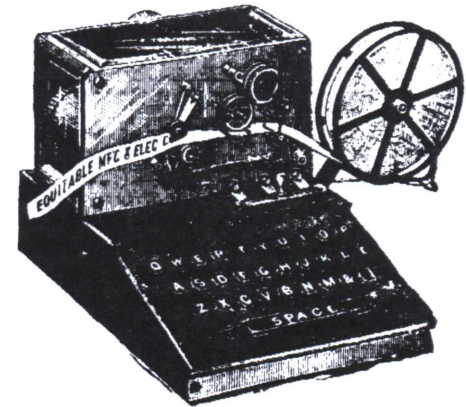
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The flying saucer is the perfect expression of Fascist ideals: a glittering example of Aryan supremacy and aggressive masculinity



L E T T E R S



e-mail: johnr@magonia.demon.co.uk

Dear John
 Re ETH, your challenge to Jerry Clark echoes that of Barry Greenwood a few months ago. I predict that it will be met either by silence [it has so far, JR] or by the simple riposte that the mass of UFO evidence speaks for itself and that further elucidation is unnecessary.

The last thing an ETH proponent will do is to present the best ten (or best five) cases which indicate that alien intelligence is visiting planet Earth, since he knows full well that any sceptic can riddle each one of these top 'unknowns' full of holes that make them resemble Swiss cheese. He would then have to fall back on the 'tens of thousands of other unknowns' argument to bolster up the case for the ETH, forgetting that if a sceptic can destroy the 'top ten' what chance have any of the other myriad of cases of surviving a similar analysis.

So you need not suppose Jerry Clark or any other ETH'er is going to supply you with the ten best unanswerable UFO cases. It is well known in ufology, both in the US and elsewhere, that yesterday's UFO is today's IFO. Similarly today's UFO will be tomorrow's IFO. And if a few cases slip through the net (there will always be some) so what? None of them provide the necessary hard evidence, and none is ever likely to. The ETH proponents know they have a lost cause without producing at least one of the following:

- (i) wreckage of an actual un-earthly manufactured craft
- (ii) a body of an intelligent creature that science has certified could not have originated from planet Earth
- (iii) some genuine official documentation certifying (i) or (ii).

None of these has shown up in half a century, despite the rather pathetic and laughable attempts at forgery we have seen in recent years. There is, of course, still time for such genuine evidence to turn up, but until it does, the ETH will be ignored by mainstream science. The psychosocial hypothesis, on the other hand, requires

no such hard evidence and is therefore safe, at least until one of the above is forthcoming. ETHers always have one fallback, of course: to allege that the evidence does indeed exist, but is held in top secret locations by the authorities.

Certainly you can find some highly qualified scientists and high ranking military personnel who are quite happy to accept the UFO evidence as it now stands. And if they are four-star Generals or come from such prestigious institutes as Harvard, so much the better. ETHers rely heavily on support from these 'dissidents' to further their cause.

Another trend is the extraordinary lengths to which ETHers now go to defend lost causes, as witnessed by the futile attempts to defend the Roswell case by claiming that certain US Generals lied to their superiors in order to conceal the 'truth', or that others did not have the necessary clearances to be 'in the know', or that certain civilians were threatened with death, and so on. Such attitudes are summed up by two recent writers, Charles Ziegler and Benson Saler [see Peter Rogerson's review of their book *UFO Crash at Roswell: the genesis of a modern myth*, on page sixteen] as contributing to "a case of embattled truth".

There is no easy reply to this attitude except to ignore it, as mainstream science rightly does.

Meteorites ultimately proved to be real objects from outer space. They fell in their hundreds of thousands. They were recovered and examined, and eventually they became part of mainstream science. Ufology still has a chance, but time is surely running out. Where is the similar evidence that meteorites eventually provided? How long can and should we wait for it to be presented? Until the hurdle of hard evidence is overcome, the ETH is indeed an 'Extremely Tenuous Hypothesis'.

Sincerely, C. D. Allan
 Alsager, Stoke on Trent

BOOK REVIEWS



BY PETER ROGERSON

From the front line of the Memory Wars

Kathy Pezdek and William P. Banks (editors) *The Recovered Memory - False Memory Debate*. Academic Press, 1996. £29.95.

Daniel L. Schacter (editor) *Memory Distortion: how minds, brains and societies reconstruct the past*. Harvard University Press, 1997. £11.95.

These two anthologies of research reports and essays highlight one of the major controversies of the present time, which has relevance for all the topics discussed in *Magonia* - the nature and reliability of memory. The most public face of this controversy has been the claims of recovered memories of child abuse by adults, years after the event, which is the theme of Pezdek and Banks's anthology (P&B), and is one of the topics in the Schacter volume. The majority of the papers in P&B are more or less favourable to the idea of memory recovery; those in Schacter somewhat more sceptical. What struck me about much of this literature, was that although it provided fascinating information on the nature of childhood memory and the ease with which children remember or misremember past events, traumatic and otherwise, few of the contributors addressed the main phenomena of the recovered memory movement: the recovery by adults of powerful, emotion laden imagery, spontaneously or under various forms of therapy, which either the patient or the therapist interprets as memories.

Taken in terms only of childhood sexual abuse, it is not at all clear that the recovered memory/ false memory debate can be resolved. However if we add in the material discussed in *Magonia*, claims of alien abduction, past lives, or that one had a lost alter life as a CIA courier etc, then the balance tilts very dramatically in favour of the false memory interpretation. The memories of alien abduction or past lives have the same powerful affect-laden quality and sense of reality as do recovered memories of childhood sexual abuse. Alien abduction narratives or secret courier narratives also have another factor in common with the more extreme abuse narratives, that of the secret, parallel life, which the experient knew nothing about. It should be also noted that other people may label this powerful imagery on other folkloric lines, for example as episodes of clairvoyance or precognition. This suggests that while it is by no means impossible that isolated cases of sexual abuse may be forgotten along with many other features of childhood, only to be recalled in horror later, with adult awareness of the meaning of the event, claims of total repression of multiple, sadistic abuse should be regarded with extreme scepticism.

False and distorted memories do not only relate to these dramatic, headline situations, and both volumes contain material which will be of interest in the study of the distortion of the memory of everyday occurrences, to say nothing of the apparently anomalous experiences discussed in *Magonia*. Many of these memories contain elements of real events mixed with fantasy, something which became very apparent in studies of students memories of the Challenger disaster. (I can point to an example myself, I was quite surprised when a 30th anniversary programme on the death of JFK showed how distorted was my apparently clear memory of how the news was broken on British TV).

Of these two books, the study by Schacter is reasonably within the pocket range of most *Magonia* readers and should be considered, the P&B study is probably priced such as few readers would wish to purchase it, but it is worth trying to obtain a copy from your library.

Phil Patton. *Travels in Dreamland: the secret history of Area 51*. Orion Media, 1997. £16.99.

David Darlington. *The Dreamland Chronicles: the legends of Area 51, America's most secret base*. Little Brown and Co, 1998. £17.50.

Area 51, the vast secret base in the heart of the Nevada desert has become a central icon in contemporary American folklore. By creating this place of secrecy, the government has created a blank on the map which can be filled with the spaces and artefacts of the imagination, dark and sinister projects by the nameless *them*. These two books address this folklore.

Patton offers us the historical approach; or rather a journey along the interface between history and folklore, juxtaposing the history of the real military projects conducted within Area 51, with that area of the imagination, where alien craft fly and sinister secrets lie underground. It is in part a history of America's encounter with the big bad bomb, and the militarisation of life. It is also a study of the people who study mysteries, the buffs who chase secret technology and the buffs who chase flying saucers, and the interactions between them.

Patton places the legend of Area 51 in the context of the changing fashions of UFO beliefs, the cold war ufology of Donald Keyhoe, the pseudoscience of the sixties, and the abduction beliefs in the age of the victim culture, the legend coming from the conspiracy post Watergate. Indeed it was in the year of Watergate that the 1897 Aurora crash story was resurrected, beginning the mainstream rehabilitation of crashed saucer stories. Patton also traces the merger of the UFO conspiracies with the militia and other radical-right conspiracy theories, the myth of the new world order, and the ubiquitous black helicopters, which Patton calls the UFOs of the militias.

There are many insightful vignettes on the Grays, for example: "its overtones were of a huge foetus or hungry child, with Keene kid big eyes and head larger than body. There were even echoes in the image of Munch's *The Scream* - the cliché face of modern angst itself". Or on a MUFON convention: "in the same rooms and with the same tone of seriousness and internal self satisfaction as a regional gathering of insurance salesmen or social workers. I noticed that no-one smiled."

Darlington's account is more biographical, detailing his own journeys to the Area, and his meetings with the many curious characters that one can meet there, and placing them in the context of the modern legend. He tells the story of Bob Lazar, both the story that Lazar pre-

sents, and the one of the unknown Lazar, as ferreted out by researcher Tom Ma-hoot, the Lazar who runs up unpaid debts and whose first wife died of carbon monoxide poisoning from motor vehicle exhaust in the garage of the couple's Las Vegas home two days after he married his second wife, without obtaining a divorce. A verdict of suicide being reached without autopsy. Lazar's descriptions of the amazing flying saucer propulsion system, make it clear, that far from being a nuclear physicist, he lacked even a good high school understanding of physics.

Lazar has now been joined by another whistle blower, Bill Uhouse who claims to have worked alongside an alien while back-engineering crashed saucer technology at the base. Uhouse has taken to using the pseudonym Jarod, also the name of the alleged alien, who when he speaks, speaks to you in your own voice. Uhouse tells of how the cabal running the base will soon put an end to democracy, something that Uhouse is all in favour of. Here is the tale of Glen Campbell, formerly the secret technology buff, and anti-military activist, sceptical of the flying saucer tales, who appeared to be converted by Uhouse's tales, and here is the saga of Campbell's dispute with the owners of the Little A-Le-Inn and of the many other squabbles of this small fraternity. Darlington takes a neutral line on the various issues, his is not the task of proving one thing or another, it is telling a story.

Meanwhile the American government has got itself caught in a bind, one suspects that originally the wild tales of Lazar and his kin were not unwelcome, they helped to divert attention away from the real scandals of the base: the poor working conditions, the health and safety hazards facing the workers, the waste of huge sums of taxpayers money on projects which never got anywhere, or which ended up in peoples pockets, and the general issue of the expropriation of huge areas of the people's land for the benefit of the military-industrial complex. It didn't do too much harm either if potential enemies occasionally wondered if it might be true after all. The result has been however that Area 51 has become the least secret secret base in the world; it's a tourist attraction. It can't be long before MacDonald's makes a take over bid for the Al-E-Inn, and someone sets up hamburger stalls on the ridge overlooking the base. Of course, being as brain dead as most military the base authorities don't respond by having occasional open days, complete with bands, parades and drum majorettes, they respond with the typical hostile growl, and act more and more like the army of occupation their enemies think they are.

I recommend both of these books to Magonians.

Jerome Clark. *The UFO Book: encyclopedia of the extraterrestrial*. Visible Ink, 1997. £24.50.

A revised, one volume compilation from Jerry Clark's massive three volume encyclopedia, making a large portion of the main essays in that work available to the general public for the first time. There is no doubt that had this book been written 30 years ago, it would have been *the* UFO book. Now, while still excellent in many ways, it has a somewhat old fashioned air about it, no doubt caused in part by the chronological arrangement of the master, but also because of a certain naiveté about eyewitness testimony, which was common in the subject in the 1960's but has gradually been superseded, as ufologists have come to recognise just how many cases really are IFO's. Clark's problem is that, in common with many of the older works of ufology, is he tends to imagine that UFO witnesses are Vulcans, perfect, emotionless, observing, reasoning and recording devices. They are no such thing, of course, they are human beings, and no uniform, dog collar or college degree can exempt them from the eternal fallibilities of the human condition.

The result of this is that Clark tends to view any conventional interpretation of UFO stories as a personal attack on the integrity of the witnesses, rather than an acceptance of the universal failings of the human perceptual processes when it is trying to undertake tasks, which it did evolve to do. Indeed in many cases the perceptual processes actually fools us, because it is doing its job too well, in manufacturing patterns out of raw, ambiguous data.

As the sub title suggests, even more than the original this book is not an impartial summing up, but a lawyers brief for the ETH, and it has to be said that on occasion Clark resorts to some nifty lawyers tricks, in particular conventional explanations are rarely examined in detail but brushed aside as "debunkers said that... but". Often contrary views are dismissed solely on the basis that Dr James McDonald disagreed with them. He couldn't actually be wrong on occasion

could he?

Clark is deeply scathing about paranormal explanations of UFO stories, and on the whole I would tend to agree with him; where I part company is his assumption that the ETH is much superior. At first sight, Clark's arguments are plausible, the ETH does not, as far as current knowledge goes, violate any prime knowledge claim, or invoke radical new principles, or run wholly counter to current scientific knowledge. However it is a long way from saying that to saying it accounts for specific apparent anomalies. For the ETH to be a testable scientific hypothesis we would have to have 'independent' knowledge as to the powers and capabilities of the ET's which could test against observations. As it is we don't even have the slightest scrap of evidence for the existence of the ET's let alone what their powers and capabilities would be.

It is not surprising then that the ETH theories presented by different ufologists show very little mutual coherence, the ETH of Donald Keyhoe, Stanton Friedman, Aimé Michel, Budd Hopkins etc not only don't gel together, they are often mutually incompatible. After all one of the fiercest critics of the nuts and bolts ETH was Michel, arguing from a rival ETH viewpoint.

If we try as best we can to analyse the ETH from what little evidence we have, then the omens are not good; for the ETH to be a scientific hypothesis we have to limit the ET's to what is possible by the physics we know about, and there the verdict is while interstellar travel might be theoretically possible, in practice it would be inordinately difficult, one would certainly not expect to see 'space ships' carrying biological entities, meaningful two way space travel is ruled out by all the physics we know, any interstellar traveller is going in for permanent exile. The description of the alleged occupants as humanoids may well violate current scientific knowledge. Certainly if the neo-Darwinian thesis is correct, it would appear to be ruled out (the arguments raised by Michael Swords represent very much a minority opinion, certainly most evolutionary biologists regard

the possibility of quasi humans evolving elsewhere as very remote indeed). Difficult as it is to anticipate what an ET craft would behave like, there is no good reason to think it would resemble an ultra high performance aircraft, which is what a literal reading of much eyewitness testimony would suggest, in any case much of the claimed behaviour of UFOs does seem to violate known physics. And when it comes to abductees being drawn through solid walls and seeing the cobwebs inside as they do so, that does violate a prime knowledge claim, it is simply impossible.

Clark may object that we have no right to place such limits on supposed ET's. Maybe so, but if give to the ET's the famed 'magic technology', then in practice we are simply creating another empty supernatural hypothesis, we can ascribe to the ET's any properties we like. At this end of the spectrum the ET becomes a synonym for god and we are in the domain of religion not science.

Clark may be partially correct in his critique of some of the earlier psychosocial hypotheses, but even the worst of them is better than invoking magical technologies possessed by hypothetical ET's. There are of course, other hypothesis which Clark doesn't even discuss, such as the Earthlights hypothesis and others involving poorly understood natural phenomena, for example.

I am afraid that Clark has failed to convince me of his argument. Reading through the cases in this book I suspect several are radically misperceived astronomical objects, still others probably psychological phenomena, still others hoaxes, some military activity, some perhaps novel natural phenomena. No a whiff of ET. But don't let that you dissuade you from buying this book, it is affordable, it is the best case the supporters of the ETH can make, it is full of obscure information, and it is work of genuine effort by someone who has spent a lifetime in the subject, and is far more worthy of your cash than the hacks. It would also take a book-length review to do justice to it.

Benson Saler, Charles A. Ziegler and Charles B. Moore. *UFO Crash at Roswell: the genesis of a modern myth*. Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997. £19.50.

This book is essentially a merging of three separate essays, with a concluding chapter and appendixes. The first, by Benson Saler, an anthropologist at Brandeis University explores the Roswell legend in terms of folklore. He argues that there is a misunderstanding about the nature of the Roswell narratives when they are perceived either as exposés or simple hoaxes. Such stories are examples of modern folklore. He lists the various versions of the Roswell myth as presented by successive authors, and shows how they obey the model of the transmission of folklore as suggested by Barlett and others: fantastic elements are incorporated into the narrative and unacceptable features are removed, thus in the six versions presented here (it has grown since this essay was written) some features, once introduced, persist in all subsequent versions. Others which do not fit into pre-conceptions are quickly eliminated. The comparison between these narratives makes it very apparent that these are not

the narratives of real historical events, though they have a historical core, in the finding of the balloon debris on Bill Brazel's field.

Saler calls the tellers of the sort of first person narratives that appear in the Roswell stories, 'traditors' and argues that people incorporate traditional folkloric motifs into what purport to be the first person narratives of actual events. Whether this is a conscious or unconscious process is unclear, but in many cases it is, I suspect, more likely that people unconsciously incorporate these motifs into their perceptions, memories and narratives.

The second psychosocial paper in this volume, is by another Braneis anthropologist, Charles Ziegler. This seeks to examine Roswell as a religious narrative, and is much less successful. While there are elements of ufology which have very clear religious overtones, the Roswell narrative lies well within the secular end of the spectrum, for it emphasises the mortality and vulnerability of the 'the other'. The aliens spaceships are vulnerable, they can crash, the occupants are mortal and their bodies reduced to just yet more carrion. Indeed this must be one of

the main attractions of these stories.

Though the content of the Roswell stories is decidedly secular, belief in it can be held with religious intensity. The ufological true believers cannot imagine the Air Force saying anything which would convince them that the Roswell debris were *not* from an ET craft. These essays were written before the furore at MUFON, because Dennis Stacy had dared to print an article critical of the Roswell legend: the resulting complaints clearly expressing religious type arguments. The reaction was rather as if the *Catholic Herald* had featured advertisements for abortion clinics. (Of course, in fairness it must be said that just the same reaction would occur if *Skeptical Inquirer* ever published a pro-paranormal article - skepticism and rationalism can be just as passionately held religious beliefs as any other)

The third essay, by meteorologist Charles Moore is a discussion of the Project Mogul balloon flights, demonstrating, I think, that the 4th June balloon flight produced the Roswell debris. Moore, in an appendix gives details of his involvement with the ufological community and their distortions of his statements.



Philip J. Imbrogno and Marianne Horgan. *Contact of the 5th Kind* Llewellyn, 1997 \$7.99.

The authors define Close Encounters of the 5th Kind as Contact between a human being and an intelligence not of this world. In some cases a UFO is seen; however in other cases no UFO is reported, and this book includes a number of accounts of channelling. These, which include Dean Fagerstrom who has produced a series of technical drawings of strange devices allegedly from Donesta of Solarion, and channels music from Franz Liszt (presumably on leave from Rosemary Brown), show how easily the folklore of spiritualism can transform into the new folklore of ufology.

Indeed this whole book, which brings in flying triangles, abductions, crop circles, Druids, mystery ruins in New York State, etc, should be seen as an account of folklore compiled from inside the UFO milieu. Within this American UFOlogical folklore pre-modernist, (legends of ghosts, haunted ruins, fairies, boggarts and demons), modernist (space ships, government conspiracies) and post modernist (new age, reincarnation etc) themes intermingle and merge into each other. The result is much more untidy than scientific ufologists, who would like to accumulate evidence which would prove that scientifically comprehensible ET's are visiting the earth, would wish.

Unlike the authors, I do not think much use can come of taking all of this literally as evidence that mysterious non human forces are intervening in human affairs. Rather they suggest some valuable possible lines of enquiry into the nature of human creativity, the social roles of narratives of the supernatural and patterns of continuity and change in folklore.

Janet Bergmark. *In the Presence of Aliens: a personal experience of dual consciousness*. Llewellyn Publications, 1997. \$10.95.

Another first hand account of alleged abductions, in which a person who has had episodes of aware sleep paralysis and other odd experiences in the past, has spooked herself by reading Whitley Streiber's books, and gets scared in the dark, goes to a new age hypnotist, and surprise finds she is an abductee, and has a dual identity as an alien. There is the usual evocation of gnosticism, souls of light volunteering to enter human bodies. And when she wonders how come most of these souls of lights have short and nasty lives, the answer she comes up with is in essence that poor people and black people don't have souls, they have to earn them through multiple lifetimes of suffering. Excuse me for a minute while I clean the sick off the computer. Faced with stuff like this its not hard to have a frisson of sympathy with those Christians who detect the whiff of sulphur in the new age.

Paul Devereux and Peter Brookesmith. *UFOs and Ufology: the first 50 years*. Blandford Press, 1998. £18.99.

Another well illustrated coffee table book from the Blandford Press, here Devereux and Brookesmith have got together to produce what they call a broad brush history of ufology, with the main emphasis on current trends. The partnership on the whole, works well, and though one can work out who wrote which sections, there is no great clash. Both authors endorse a psychosocial interpretation of the abduction experience, though I am not sure that resurrecting Lawson is such a good idea, and, contrary to Devereux, see no reason not to ascribe Grof work memories of birth to the same fantasy-producing process that leads to memories of abduction, past lives or Satanic abuse. That quibble aside there is little doubt that the authors are on to something, and that the psychosocial interpretations are getting sharper.

As would be expected the earthlights get a good mention, and on the whole the presentation is reasonable, but why did Devereux have to start on about conscious BOLS reading peoples minds? Sometimes it pays to keep your more eccentric ideas to yourself. My feelings about the Earthlights hypothesis remain the same: like so many ufological theories, it is a good idea which gets stretched too far. Why not concede that puzzling UFO reports might not be generated by several dif-

ferent obscure and poorly understood natural phenomena, rather than trying to force everything into one basket.

There are sections on UFOs in the cinema by Nigel Watson, and crop circles by Montague Keen. The first fits seamlessly in. Keen is more problematic, and though he makes some very interesting points on the studies of crops by alleged experts, he does drift off into pseudoscience at times.

What emerges from this book is the role of culture in modulating experience, UFO reports are generated by a wide variety of external and internal stimuli but melded into a narrative by human culture, and by investigators/story tellers such as Bud Hopkins. What one also gets are suggestions as to the role of altered states of consciousness in the genesis of art. An excellent example of the how this process may operate is contained in the story of the father and son abductees investigated by Ronald Siegel, here we can see how external and internal stimuli are woven together into a culturally founded narrative. That one case alone comes close to conclusively proving the psychosocial hypothesis.

There are also discussions of ufological conspiracy theories, and a sceptical study of Roswell. I would certainly recommend this book, though I would suggest newcomers to the subject should read it in conjunction with Brookesmith's *Catalogue of UFO Sightings*, now available in a cheap edition, which fills in the details.

What is really going on here? Dare I suggest that the author, who describes having a near idyllic childhood and is doing OK in the capitalist rat race finds herself in a new deprived class, those who have no legitimate claim to the sanctified status of victimhood, and who are desperately seeking for something or someone that they can be victims of, so that they too can join the club.

Thomas I. Roberts and Susan J. Palmer (editors). *Millennium, Messiahs and Mayhem: contemporary apocalyptic movements*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1998. £13.99.

17 papers on various aspects of contemporary millennialism by leading commentators, the majority of which should be of interest to Magonia readers. The book is arranged in four sections: Theories of apocalypticism, Secularising the Millennium, Apocalypticism and the Churches, Violence and Confrontation. The papers analyse the different styles of premillennialism, with its belief in the upcoming overthrow of the world order, and postmillennialism with its belief that the millennium is working out within history by progress or reform of one sort or another. As examples of the latter John Bozeman draws our attention to the utopian scientific proj-

ects, examples given are eugenics, cryonics and space colonies. Other examples of secular apocalypticism include the militia movements discussed by Philip Lamy, in what is in effect a précis of his important book *Millennium Rage*, and the deep green environmentalist group Earth First discussed by Martha Lee.

A wide range of religious and quasi religious groups are analysed, Aum Shinrikyo, the Branch Davidians, the Solar Temple, the Christian Identity Movement all get important chapters; lesser known groups such as dissident Mormon, Adventist and even Baha'i's get chapters. Of particular interest is a study of Veronica Lueken's Bayside ministry, which mingled traditionalist Catholic concerns with imagery from Protestant Apocalyptic and popular culture, placed into the mouth of apparitions of the Virgin, complete with blurred photographs. The study of the Christian Reconstructionist Movement, the only group going which can give the Taliban a real run for its money in the totalitarian theocracy stakes, is also worthy of note.

Bob Larson. *UFO's and the Alien Agenda*. Thomas Nelson, 1997. \$12.99. Yet another fundamentalist Christian work proclaiming UFO's are invading demons.

Unlike many works of this ilk which simply quote scripture, Larson shows some capacity for rational thought, and at times gets close to accepting that UFOs might be the product of the human imagination, but of course that would never do. As always seems the case, such writers buy into all the new age superstitions in order to denounce them as works of the devil. Equally clearly we can see how for Christian fundamentalists UFO stories are threatening because they are seen as symbols of secular progress. Larson thus denounces science, belief in the possibility of life on other worlds and in large measure the modern world. Needless to say he does so through a modern means of communication, the radio and TV station, and no doubt uses a word processor, yet the sort of strict literalism and inerrancy he professes to believe in should rule them out along side belief in a globular earth. Consistency is not much of a virtue for such people however.

Paul R Gross, Norman Levitt and Martin W Lewis (editors) *The Flight from Science and Reason*. New York Academy of Sciences - Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. \$16.50

44 essays on the retreat from reason in the United States, covering a wide range of physical and social sciences. Among topics up for discussion are: pseudosciences associated with ecology, feminism, Afrocentric science history; the threat from Creationism and the influence of various postmodernist philosophies. As with many such compilations, there is a wide range of validity in the arguments. Few would dissent from the attacks on creationism, or the wilder shores of Afrocentric Egyptophilic history and science, in other areas the topics are, I think not as clear cut. If post modernists are wildly intemperate in their attacks on science, several of the writers here take an overly defensive position, often appearing to argue that scientists are Vulcans, and failing to accept that there is often a dichotomy between the ideals of science and how it is practised. The hostility towards sociology of science reflected in a fair number of essays is a case in point. Here both parties tend to take extreme positions, yet a middle way is possible.

On the one hand it is clear that certain descriptions of the world are as true as it is going to be possible to get, no-one is ever going to discover that the earth is really a flat disc held up by an infinite regress of turtles; something that even the most radical constructionist should accept if they do not want to appear totally foolish. There really is an external world out there. On the other hand, it has to be conceded, which some scientists seem reluctant to do, that the only way, ultimately that we can know this external world is through the lens of the human perceptual and cognitive process, and that lens can be subject to various bias and distortions.

Philip J. Corso and William J. Birnes. *The Day After Roswell*. Pocket Books, 1997. £16.99.

The author claims to have been involved in 'back-working' alien technology from the Roswell crashed spaceship, and this gave us lasers, night sights and stealth technology; 'Star Wars' was directed against the aliens and so on. No evidence is presented to back up the story, which is obviously a load of total bullshit. Somehow Corso conned his former boss, the 99-year-old, ultra-reactionary Senator Strom Thurmond (who stood as segregationist Dixiecrat candidate for the presidency against Harry Truman in 1948), to endorse the book with a forward, from which it is clear that the senator hadn't the faintest idea of the books proposed contents, imagining it to be tales of military derring do, and not saucers in the Pentagon pantry. The only mystery is whether Corso's motivation is simply to make a quick buck, or it is part of some obscure ultra rightist agenda?

Omar Fowler. *Flying Triangle UFOs: the continuing story*. Phenomenon Research Association, 94 The Circle, Salford, Derby, DE24 9HR. £3.50.

Kevin Lynch. *UFO Over North Devon*. Lionscope Publishing, PO Box 74, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 1YN. £2.60.

John M. Jenkins. *Of No Defence Significance?: a factual appraisal on the Scottish UFO enigma*. Pen-y-Coe Press, 7 Bridge Street, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 8LL. £4.99.

Three recent examples of small press and do it yourself UFO books. Fowler's is a catalogue of recent flying triangle reports both in Britain and overseas, Lynch's a report of a triangle of lights seen by his parents in 1978, and Jenkins' is an account of both LITS and close encounters, including missing time incidents. As with many of such cases, it is very difficult to work out from the information given, just what happened. Some Triangle cases may be generated by a variety of terrestrial aircraft, others may be optical illusions, three bright lights giving the im-

pression of a background darker than the surrounding sky. One of the cases discussed by Jenkins seems to be a fireball, another may have been caused by a police helicopter, others may be astronomical. Some of course are more puzzling and would require extensive investigation.

Donald S Johnson. *Phantom Islands of the Atlantic*. Souvenir Press, 1997. £14.99.

Today we have contactees who visit strange worlds beyond the boundaries of known habitation. In earlier times these liminal places were lost islands just beyond the frontiers of the explored world. Some of the seven lost islands discussed by sailor and writer Donald Johnson are, like many UFOs, the result of misidentification of real places, or phenomena such as fog banks or mirages. But others such as Hy Brazil or St Brendan's Islands are countries of the imagination about which contactee-like voyage narratives were recorded. Johnson shows that the descriptions of these lands demonstrate their allegorical nature, paradisaical locations whose descriptions were inspired by passages from the Bible, not least the vision of the New Jerusalem in Revelations.

Though the tale of St Brendan may have used descriptions of real places such as Iceland, its author(s) did so to add scenery and interest to the tale. It is a complete misunderstanding of such stories to see them as somehow embroidered but essentially factual descriptions of real voyages. Similarly it would be a mistake to argue that Hy Brazil was *nothing but* a mirage - certainly, mirages may have been the building blocks out of which the myth was constructed, but what we have is a powerful visionary location of the imagination.

It seems a pity that so few seem to be willing to accept that the strange experiences, locations and personnel of today's visionary narratives are the product of cultural imagination, or that being such does not rob the stories of meaning or authenticity but greatly enhances it.

Andrew Donkin. *Alien abduction, could it happen to you?* Bloomsbury, 1997. £3.99.

Phillippa Wingate. *Alien Abduction*. Usborne Paranormal Guides, 1997. £6.50.

At the recent abduction conference at Southport, BUFORA's Director of Investigations told us how the organisation was increasing being rung by children afraid that they were the victims of abduction; given this alarming development it seems prudent to find out what children are actually being told about abductions, and here are two children's books with the word abduction prominently in the title.

The Usborne title is a short illustrated book aimed at perhaps 9-10 years olds, full of colour pictures. It features Arnold, Mantell, Trans-en-Provence, Hopkinsville, Roswell, the Hills, Travis Walton and Linda Cortile, with brief details and assessments. It is, of course, very difficult to summarise these very complex and controversial cases in a few paragraphs, and while alternative explanations are provided in some cases the general impression is a pro ETH one. I am particularly concerned about the use of the Linda Cortile story, as this involves a bedroom abduction, and though the case gets a rather sceptical treatment, it does seem potentially very frightening for younger children.

Donkin's book is aimed at slightly older children, say 11-13, and is a reasonable summary of the abduction experience by someone with a background in ufology, and the book makes a real attempt to convey the complexities of the field, with discussions of alternate hypotheses, and noting the continuities with tales of fairies. The detail is not excessive, and the treatment sober. It is clearly a responsible attempt, and it would be a far preferable introduction than the supermarket tabloids or the writings of Hopkins and Jacobs which must be truly terrifying for children.

That being said, I am not convinced that *any* of this material is now suitable for the under 15's. We've moved

a long way from nice safe stories of metallic spaceships flying high on warm Midwestern evenings, which was the imagery of the UFO books of my youth (though the Flatwoods monster could have been scary for some). Tales of bedroom invaders and people being sucked out of windows are not for the kiddies.

Richard Wiseman. *Deception and Self Deception: investigating psychics*. Prometheus, 1997. £22.00.

A collection of mainly previously published papers, with a specially written introduction by magician and psychologist Richard Wiseman (in most cases as co-author), on the search for trickery in the paranormal. Among the topics discussed are a re-evaluation of the one of the key series of Eusapia Palladino seances (which evoked the expected howls when it was first published in the SPR Journal), a test of the ESP claims of the SORRAT entities (unsuccessful), a test of the abilities of alleged psychic detectives (they failed, but one well known character later claimed on *Esther* that he had succeeded), the materialising powers of Indian holy men (trickery suspected though not proven, not possible to get them to agree to properly controlled tests), and the influence of belief on the perception and recall of staged pseudo paranormal events.

Unlike many of the 'debunkers', Wiseman has avoided a confrontational approach to psychical researchers, working as a critic within the psychical research community (he edited the SPR Newsletter for a while) and most of the papers in this volume have previously appeared in the psychical research journals, and are co-written by well known psychical researchers. It is good to see that people with differing views can work together.

While interesting in many ways, this book was to some extent a disappointment, as I had hoped that it would be a *proper* book, rather than a collection of isolated essays. Hopefully that book will come one day

Scott Corrales. *Chupacabras and other mysteries*. Greenleaf Publications, 1997. \$19.50

Tales of the goat sucker in Puerto Rico and elsewhere, several of which were collected by first hand interviews. The book is padded out with tales of abductions and other ufological matters throughout Ibero-America.

Despite the authors rejection of the psychosocial interpretation, the fact that chupacabras stories spread throughout the Spanish speaking world, following cultural and linguistic not geographic boundaries is pretty good evidence that we are confronting a social phenomena. The folklore of Chupacabras is seen to be merging with other contemporary folkloric themes. We can also see that the belief that Ibero-American UFO narratives have a much higher violence content than those in North America and elsewhere is at least partially confirmed.

Gray Barker. *They Knew Too Much About Flying Saucers*. Illuminet Press, 1997. \$12.99.

No doubt to coincide with the film *Men in Black*, a re-issue of the original MIB book, Gray Barker's story of the silencing of Al Bender, with a new introduction by John Keel. The book contains not only the MIB stories, but a wide range of very early ufological folklore, such as the Flatwoods monster, the miners and the little man, strange contactees etc. Great for nostalgia fans in *Magonia's* glorious thirtieth anniversary year!

Joseph McMoneagle. *Mind Trek: exploring consciousness, time and space through remote viewing*. Hampton Books, 2nd ed. 1997. £10.99.

An amended version of the story of the one of the main characters in the remote viewing affair. McMoneagle presents the usual story of the man who after a NDE develops strange talents and gets into the remote

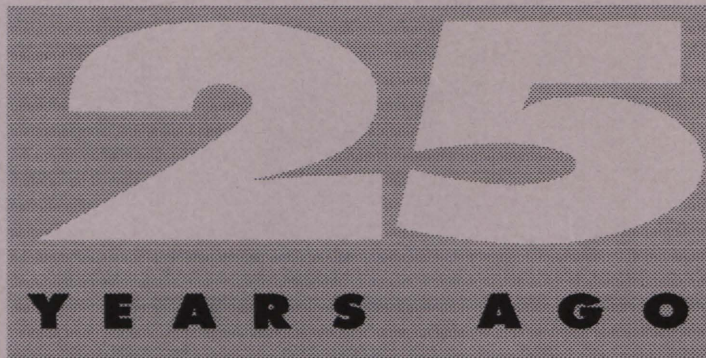
viewing game. As with all these accounts, it is very difficult to work out whether anything truly anomalous occurred. As the remote viewing brought up wild tales of Martian pyramids and giant humanoids, it seems obvious that fantasy plays a not insubstantial role in the phenomenon. Looking at the author's drawings, not least the archetypal (sic) symbols common to all humans attempting RV, reproduced on page p66, it struck me that some of the RV imagery is built up from the classic geometrical forms of entoptic imagery (the lattices, triangles, spirals etc).

Ron Halliday and others. *McX: Scotland's X Files*. B and W Publishing, 1997. £6.99.

Scottish UFO stories, folklore and unsolved mysteries. Entertaining, and not wholly uncritical, but lacks references, and still resorts to inadequate, populist, 'they couldn't all be mistaken' sort of arguments.

Volume 5, number 6 (May 1973) contained just one article, a 'feature review' by Peter Rogerson of two books which seemed to herald a new rapprochement between science and the 'paranormal': Alan Hynek's *UFO Experience*, and John Napier's *Bigfoot*. Reading this piece now, with the benefit of a quarter of a century's hindsight, how hopelessly naive it all seems - and I'm sure Peter won't be offended by me saying that. This was perhaps the last period when there was any realistic hope of 'our' subjects being accepted into the canon of the physical and biological sciences, and, at the time, comments like these did not seem too unrealistic: "The best solution would seem to be a private international body devoted to the whole range of anomalous phenomena. This would greatly increase the cross-fertilisation of ideas and information between workers in the various fields. It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that some wealthy individuals, or some institution, might be prepared to finance such a project".

In the intervening years we have seen one or two wealthy individuals involving themselves in this field. However, without exception, they have come



into it with their own fixed views and have used their money help reinforce those views, rather than to finance a truly objective research study.

In a brief editorial John Harney welcomed the attempts at scientific respectability represented by Hynek's book. In fact the book had little impact outside the UFO scene, except of course for the coining of the phrase 'close encounters of the third kind'. It has recently been reprinted. Hynek, we later learned, was not the paragon of scientific objectivity we had thought at the time. He had been a closet ETH believer since his first involvement with ufology, as well as prac-

tising a form of ritual magic.

Like the previous issue, volume 6, number 1 (July 1973) was dominated by the INTCAT listings. This extract covered the years 1930 to 1949. The entries from the thirties were predominantly John Keel's 'phantom airship' reports from Scandinavia, but the most important thing about this section of INTCAT is what was *not* in it. Peter Rogerson's research was prodigious. To compile INTCAT he scoured hundreds of books, magazines, newsletters and other catalogue listings, yet nowhere did he find anyone who thought to set out an account of Roswell! The incident which now dominates the

world of ufology was, in 1973, so obscure, so insignificant that not one of the information sources trawled by INTCAT thought it worthwhile listing it!

The main article in this was Roger Sandell's first major contribution to MUFOB. His demolition of 'ancient astronaut' theories was a foretaste of many more articles, with its meticulous historical detail, and his unwillingness to accept shoddy research when presented as fact. Typical of his thoroughness, he had undertaken an evening course in Ancient History in order to assess the ancient astronaut evidence more accurately.

Roger's piece came at the start of a long association with MUFOB and Magonia. Another piece in the same issue, Alan Sharp's critical look at the Loch Raven Dam, Delaware, case from 1958, was written almost at the end of Alan's period of association with the magazine. In it he took a typically sceptical look at a classic close encounter claim, demonstrating that the mystery object seen by two witnesses was a US Navy balloon, and ending up suggesting that any MUFOB readers close enough could don diving gear and head underwater in search of its jettisoned payload.

EXAMINING THE ETH

These two reviews are taken from issue two of the *Magonia ETH Bulletin*. This is a new monthly newsletter edited by John Harney, which critically examines claims and evidence supposedly supporting the extraterrestrial hypothesis. It is published primarily as an attachment to the Magonia web-site (www.magonia.demon.co.uk), and is only available in paper form to a limited number of exchange correspondents. Issue 1 looked at the Trindade Island photographs, issue 2 takes a critical look at sceptics' attempts to explain the Travis Walton abduction. John Harney is keen to root out double-talk and glib explanations whichever side of the ufological fence they originate.

Timothy Good. *Alien Base: Earth's Encounters with Extraterrestrials*, Century, London, 1998. £16.99.

Although few British ufologists take the ETH very seriously, most of them are uneasily aware that this is what draws the crowds to UFO lectures and, more importantly, sells books by the trainload. Seeing the danger of boring his readers with yet more rather dull official UFO reports and catalogues of funny lights in the sky, and still unable to produce evidence that would convince a reasonably alert six-year-old, Good obviously feels that he has to come up with something.

Some of us can remember the old days when we read about the amazing exploits of Adamski, Fry, Bethurum, Angelucci and all the other contactees, and

naively wondered if there might possibly be some grain of truth in their stories. Quite a few of us are still around, and Good obviously realises this and is mindful of the old adage: The older they get, the dafter they get.

And what could be dafter than attempting to rehabilitate that notorious fantasist, who needs no introduction. Ladies and gentlemen, George Adamski! [Applause]. It seems that Adamski really did meet the space people, but it all went to his head and they eventually decided he was untrustworthy. How does Good know this? Simple - a friend told him. This friend had been contacted by "the same, or a similar group of extraterrestrials that Adamski knew" who told her that "Adamski was indeed selected and contacted by this certain group of extraterrestrials, but at an early stage he disclosed some secret information with which he had been entrusted, and it therefore became necessary for them to feed him with false information which would discredit him, thereby protecting their own interests". So that's how it's done; if you want to know if one contactee is genuine, just ask another contactee.

There are other ways of testing the veracity of contactees. For example, Paul Villa was asked what the other crew members were doing while he was conversing with the pilot of the saucer. Villa replied that they were just bathing their feet in the river. Good remarks: "At

the time, that reply, delivered without so much as the bat of an eyelid, astonished me. Eventually, though, it contributed to a growing conviction that Paul Villa's story contains essential elements of truth."

There are many other contactee yarns in this book, so if you are as easy to convince as Good is, then you might enjoy reading it. But do I detect a hint of doubt? The author's use of chapter headings such as 'A Pantomime of Unrealities', 'A Festival of Absurdities', 'Alien Fantasia' and 'Beyond Belief' suggests that perhaps we shouldn't take these tales too literally.

Nicholas Redfern. *The FBI Files: The FBI's UFO Top Secrets Exposed*, Simon & Schuster, London, 1998. £16.99.

The FBI at one time denied that they investigated UFO reports, but files obtained from them under the provisions of the Freedom of Information legislation have shown that they have been involved from the beginning. US Army Intelligence had asked for their help in questioning witnesses to find out if they were "sincere in their statements that they saw these discs, or whether their statements were prompted by personal desire for publicity or political reasons".

Of particular interest are the FBI's investigations of contactees, such as Adamski and Van Tassel, which were partly accounted for by the fact that some people complained that they were

spreading politically subversive ideas. Redfern, though, has devised a complicated theory to account for the FBI's continuing interest in the subject.

At an early stage, relations with the military became rather strained because the FBI suspected that they were withholding information that they had promised to share. It seems that J. Edgar Hoover was intrigued by reports of crashed saucers and was keen to discover the truth of the matter. Redfern's thesis is that, as they couldn't get satisfactory answers from the military, they attempted to obtain information by checking on people who claimed knowledge of UFO landings or crashes.

He goes into great detail about the alleged Aztec UFO crash of 1948, which is described in Frank Scully's book *Behind the Flying Saucers*. The theory is that Leo GeBauer and Silas Newton had somehow learned about it and passed on the details to Scully, who published a distorted version. He implies that the FBI's interest in these characters was due to their knowledge of UFOs rather than because of their criminal activities.

The information that Redfern has extracted from the FBI concerning their investigations of UFO reports, ufologists and witnesses is very interesting. However, as in his previous book (*A Covert Agenda*), his implausible speculations and his use of unreliable sources to bolster his support for the ETH, tends to spoil what could be a useful and serious

H O L D T H E B A C K P A G E

Free the Bonnybridge One!

A brave dissident from the Tartan Terror sends a defiant manifesto across the border via the Internet:

"I have recently visited your web-site and would like to say that I am a resident in the Scottish town of Bonnybridge, Greenhill to be exact. I would like to say that in all the time that I have lived here, about twelve years, I can safely say that I have never seen a damn thing in the sky and would like all you paranoid weirdoes to bugger off and leave the town alone".

Saratoga News

A curious little news item from the *Saratoga (California) Times* comes our way (what do you mean you don't have a subscription?) which could make salutary reading for any hypnosis enthusiasts still at large in British ufology:

"A Saratoga psychologist agreed to surrender her license on August 10 after the California State Board of Psychology accused her of 'being grossly negligent.' The board filed a formal accusation against Edith Fiore, Ph.D., whose office was located at 20688 Fourth St. in Saratoga, charging her with gross negligence for discussing her personal and romantic life during therapy sessions; not obtaining a signed consent for an unusual treatment procedure; imposing her own belief system on her patient, known only as 'J.H.'; and telling J.H. that past-life regression therapy would cure her.

"State Deputy Attorney General Susan Meadows said that based on the facts, the case is "uncommon. The Board of Psychology first brought an accusation against Fiore in April 1995, after one of her patients filed a complaint to the board about Fiore's treatment of her. In the board's complaint against Fiore, J.H. said she first sought treatment from Fiore in May 1992 because she was "distressed over a medical condition that required surgery."

"Fiore charged J.H., who is disabled with a serious illness, \$240 per session. The documents state that Fiore told J.H. she would use hypnosis to remove 90 entities, comprised of dead people, from J.H.'s person. J.H. said she told Fiore after two or three sessions that the hypnosis was not working. Documents state Fiore told J.H. she would then hypnotise her to go back into her past life.

"In July 1992, Fiore allegedly discussed her love life with J.H. during a therapy session. During one of J.H.'s sessions, Fiore reportedly told her that the entities had been removed "and that they

should explore whether J.H. may have been abducted by unidentified flying objects [UFOs]..."

"Meadows said Fiore surrendered her license and agreed to stipulations made by the state and the board without going to an administrative trial. Fiore, who did not return phone calls from the *Saratoga News*, told Meadows—and states on her office voicemail—that she has retired from the clinical practice of psychology.

"With the surrender of her license, Fiore can no longer practice as a psychologist in the state of California. In three years, Fiore may petition the board for reinstatement of her license. If she petitions and her license is reinstated, Fiore will be required to pay \$10,706.27 to the board for the cost of her investigation. Meadows said she did not believe Fiore will try to reinstate her license. "[Fiore] wants to move on with her life," she said.

"It is unknown whether J.H. has or will file a civil suit against Fiore to retrieve money she paid to Fiore for her therapy sessions. The Board of Psychology received about 600 complaints statewide about psychologists from July 1996 to June 1997, according to the board's latest statistics. Of those cases, nine psychologists had decisions handed down against them for gross negligence."

Naturally, all other psychologists and hypnotherapist involved in abduction regressions are people of the ut-

most integrity and we would not wish to suggest that... blah... blah... blah...

Fashion Notes

According to Internet postings the trend started by the Manchester group MAPIT for co-ordinated dress codes for investigators has been taken a stage further by the group APRO (surely not the Lorenzen APRO? That faded away many years ago - the report is all very vague Ed) as announced on the US radio show *The X Zone*.

According to APRO spokesman and fashion guru Bill Heft, members will wear uniforms while investigating UFO incidents: "The uniforms will consist of a black jacket, with black pants, black shoes and a crisp white shirt. The back of the jacket will identify the wearer as an APRO Investigator." More likely it will identify them as a stupid prat, but let that pass.

There will also be a shoulder flash on the jacket and investigators will carry picture identification and a pocket badge. According to Heft the uniforms "will show the public that APRO is taking the investigation of UFOs very seriously". The shoulder flashes will show the 'rank' of members within the organisation. When asked if he was inspired by the *MIB* film, Heft replied that he got the idea from his local fire department.

Apparently 'thousands' of APRO members around the world will be

poncing about in these uniforms, so it should be a good laugh for the rest of us!

In fact I quite like the idea of uniforms and 'rank' badges for ufologists (I originally typed 'ufologists' there, which seems somehow appropriate). Obviously the rank of 'Editor' would involve an awful lot of gold braid and flashy badges, but one can scarcely imagine what the splendour of the uniform would be like for 'Supreme Commander' Jim Moseley!

American Graffiti

Our photo, sent to us by Matt Graeber, who obtained it via his daughter Tina, shows graffiti near a railway station in Pennsylvania. It neatly encapsulates a number of contemporary UFO themes - on the left a foetus holding a glowing, sparkly ball is connected by its umbilical cord to a multicoloured saucer shape contained in the word 'estro'. On the right a flying saucer shines a beam down on - or projects from itself - a slender silhouetted figure. Next to this is the message "I wish I could really tell you all that's happened to me".

Matt comments that the artist (or vandal) is unknown, and even the photographer refused to identify himself. Is this a public expression of an actual UFO abduction, an example of how far UFO imagery has entered streetlevel popular culture, or an expression of the same kind of emotional and artistic sublimation that produces 'real' abductions.

